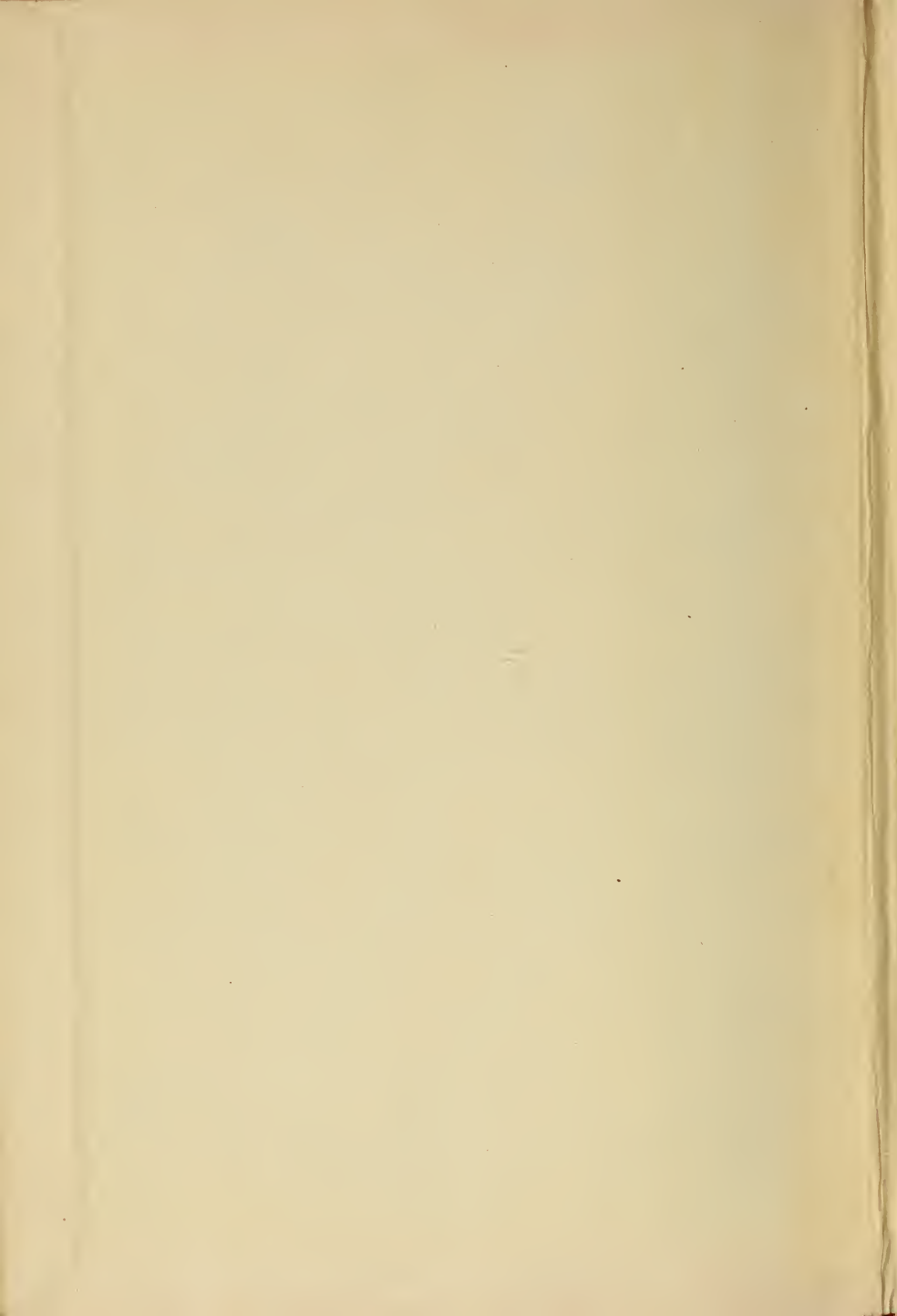
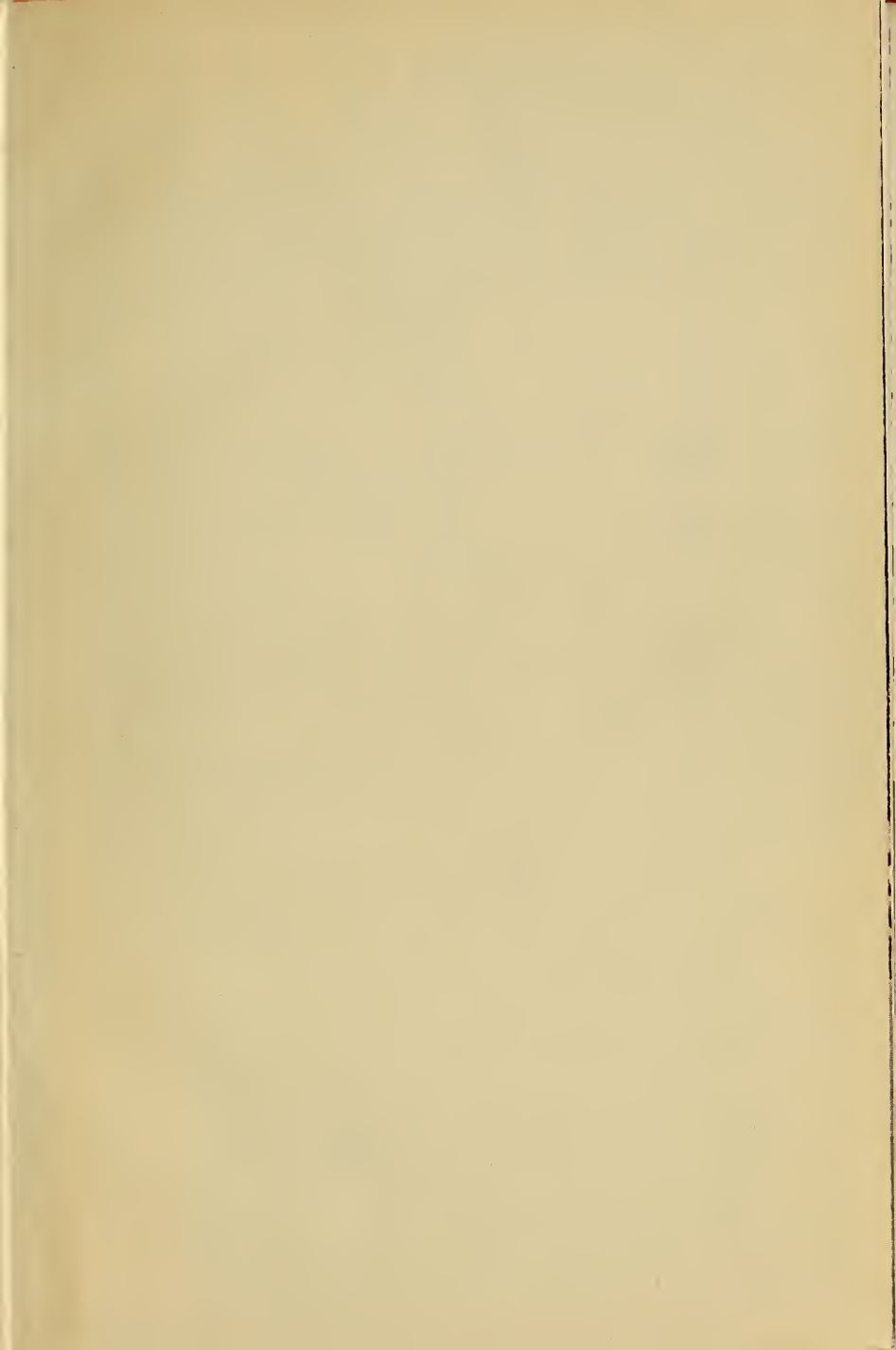






The LINK



February-March 1951



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Thomas A. Rymer, Editor
 Laura A. Gibbs, Managing Editor

The One Chosen

BY MAGDALENE LENTZ

THEY came for me in the early morning. It was still dark in our dismal prison, and the unexpected light of their flares roused me even before my cautious eyes slid to the foot prodding me to rise. Slowly my gaze moved along the fretwork of leather up the leg to the ugly sword swinging ever so slightly at the thigh, and at last upward to the beagle-nosed face of the guard. There were three others. Four men! How many of us would they take?

I looked at my men. Their faces were slack and stupid with sleep and astonishment. They stirred uneasily now and helplessly in their chains. There was Jesse across from me, and our eyes met and held together in fear and despair. It was the look of a friend he gave me; anger and fire moistened his eyes because he could do nothing for me now. For it became evident that their interest was in me alone.

The guard said, "You are summoned." Nothing else. I stood up very quickly, very erect. I was very much afraid.

When the guard had loosened my shackles and bound me again about the neck with a cord so that if I moved too quickly I must gasp like a strangled cock, I slid into my sandals and went forward to Jesse. And he bowed and tied my sandals for me, for they did not restrain me. I put my hand on Jesse's shoulder, and he said quietly with much feeling, "God be with you." And I could say nothing at all.

At the door, though, I straightened myself again and defiantly turned about

and spat deliberately. I raised my hand and shouted, "Long live Israel!" But there was no answering spark in the faces of the men. Their eyes no longer glowed and glittered at the words as they had in the spell of our warming fire's circle. For mine was a lost cause. Mine had been a fool scheme. They were paying for its foolhardiness and wondering even now if they would be led suddenly and alone as I to their death. There were only dejection and despair in their faces. My guards did nothing at all at this last futile gesture of mine. They knew the foolish antics of a man about to die.

I had seen men die, die slowly, die quickly. I had killed men myself. But death for me. . . .

We came past the outer gate into the morning. I could have wept to see the world again. There was a fig tree putting forth her leaves. Because I dared not think forward, I must think back, and I was a boy again seeking the first ripe fig. My mother was suddenly before me. And my father . . . oh, the honor of my father. And I had now brought it to shame. Shame that would live after me. It was spring and the very earth smelled of fresh life. And I must die.

I looked to the Judean hills. There our fires had glowed in the night like the eyes of an animal at its prey. There I had dreamed my futile dream. I hated the men who had come to plunder and rob, but I shared in their loot, for I must have power. Power! And here

was I, powerless, being led like a filthy animal to slaughter.

Then I heard the voices. Voices repeating something into a chanting cadence. Over and over again. But I would not ask my guards what it meant. I spat with contempt, and I would ask nothing of them.

And then I heard it clearly. My name! Surely my name. The people were shouting my name. They had not forgotten me. My people. My eyes swam in a mist of weakness.

I—who had in bitterness called them weak and lazy, dreamers and fools, cowards, vacillating and stupid. And they had remembered me. My people!

This is an hour of destiny. This is my hour!

My people had come to acclaim and deliver me. And I knew now that the power lay in the people themselves. And I who had always held them in scorn felt humble before them.

They led me then into the judgment hall. There was another there also bound like myself. And a soldier of my guard, when he came alongside him, suddenly struck him in the face. I felt a sick shock, for they had treated me well. But the man remained calm and

silent and looked only at the governor. The magistrate looked exceedingly harassed.

At the sight of me the multitude shouted my name again and again. And the governor asked, "Which of them shall I release?" And I felt trembling and afraid. Beside this man I looked a foul coward. He stood so calm and unafraid.

But the crowd shouted my name.

"And what shall I do with the other?"

And they cried in such a force of passion as if to override the reluctance of the governor, that I knew then they wanted this man's execution more than my release.

The governor took some water and washed his hands before the multitude. "I am innocent of this. See to it yourselves."

Then was I released.

And I thought as I walked toward my people who had cried "Barabbas!" why does this man die in my place?

I walked, looking neither right nor left, straight through their midst, but they paid me no heed. I walked out of the throng and was forgotten.



To those who do not share our Christian faith or in whom hope has grown dim we would testify to our belief that God rules. When it seems that we are all caught in a meaningless struggle in the dark, let it be remembered that the forces of this world—physical might, destruction and death—do not in the long span of experience prove to be final. The human spirit in tune with its Creator is not the helpless victim of time and circumstance. Especially at Easter we who are Christians praise God that through the darkness of confusion, fear, bitterness and frustration of our time, He has made the light to shine. Our destiny is not sealed by what this world may do. Beyond death is life. We give thanks unto God "who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

SOONER or later nearly every new acquaintance wants to know what I consider the most unforgettable incident I encountered in the years I spent overseas as a foreign correspondent. Usually I dig up some anecdote from the second World War, dust it off, and present it to the inquirer as interestingly as possible. But occasionally I feel a deep liking for someone I have just met, and I tell him about the man wearing dark glasses on the plane bound for China.

He was sitting just behind me. I noticed (rather enviously) that the stewardess was standing by his side with her hand resting lightly on his shoulder as the Clipper gave a slight leap and rose from the water. She patted his shoulder and left to attend to her duties as soon as we reached the altitude at which we would fly.

I thought that he must be making his first flight, that she had stood by to calm him—until I saw the strangely serene smile hovering about his lips. That odd smile seemed to glow on the pale skin which ill fitted the rugged lines of his face.

My attention was diverted by the man who sat beside me. He tried to get a poker game started, but the other passengers were still too enthralled by the novelty of our trip. He did break the ice, though, and I learned his name, Cander, and the names of the passengers sitting around us. The man wearing dark glasses was Leland Rance.

Perhaps you have heard of Leland Rance. I had never met him, but I was familiar with his name. I first came across it in some news dispatches concerning the rebel air force which fought so valiantly, and vainly, in the Spanish civil war. Later I was transferred to China to cover the war which brewed there, and again his name appeared—

THE SAINTLY SINNER

by
WESLEY FREESTONE



in the roster of the Flying Tigers. He, along with most of the other American flyers in that group, transferred to the U. S. Air Force when we entered the war.

The iron-grey streaks in Cander's hair put his age somewhere around mine, but he still had that nervous energy common to younger people. He identified himself as a top executive in a well-known oil firm, and stated that he had reached his position in spite of little formal education because he had the ability to judge men. He claimed he could even tell each of us what we did for a living—and our reason for flying to China—by merely looking us over.

He didn't place me exactly, but he did come close. He said I was a writer going to China to do research for a book or a series of articles. Actually I was to cover the expected end of the civil war in China for a news syndicate. He involved the two men sitting in front of us in the game, guessed one was a government official (which he was), and really put the other in his occupational niche by stating he was a corporation lawyer making the trip to China to look after his company's interests.

Somewhat excited by his success, Cander asked Rance if he wanted to join the fun. Since I knew Rance by reputation I had an advantage over Cander, and I awaited his deduction with considerable interest. Cander looked him over carefully. He studied his clothes, his hands, his face, and he even tried to peer behind the dark glasses to see Rance's eyes. Rance sat quietly during the scrutiny. His hands were folded in his lap, his head slightly cocked as though he were listening to the deep song of the four powerful engines which sped us toward China, and that odd smile was still on his face.

"You're—you're a man of God," Cander finally blurted. "Yes, that's it. You're going to China to start a mission to care for the starving people."

"Just how do you figure that?" Rance asked. His level voice held a trace of humor.

"That's giving away secrets, but I'll tell you," Cander replied. "You're well dressed, but your clothes aren't flashy. You don't get out in the sun much. Too busy with church work. All of that don't mean much. What I really went by was the way you smile all of the time. Nobody smiles like that unless they're at peace with the world—and who would that be but a church official?"

Rance laughed softly. "I'm afraid you missed that one. I am—or I was—a flyer. A soldier of fortune. Why am I going to China?" He leaned slightly forward and seemed to be staring directly into Cander's face. "I'm going back to marry a Chinese girl I knew during the war."

"I'll be darned," Cander muttered. "Going back to marry her after all this time, huh?"

"Yes, I'm going back. Back to Loo Toh who was willing to save me no matter what it cost her."

My interest was aroused. Rance had a reputation for being as tough as they come in spite of his quiet, almost scholarly, behaviour, and I was curious about any debt he could owe the girl which would send him back to marry her.

No one interrupted. All heads were turned toward Rance, and his low voice filtered through the ever-present drone of the engines. His audience was forgotten, and his very thoughts flowed from his mouth as he relived his experiences. He seemed in a trance, and we strained to hear each word. The stewardess was by his side again, and I was astonished to see tears gleaming in her eyes. Apparently she knew what was coming.

"It sounded like an easy one when

my squadron was briefed for the mission, and it was for the rest, but one screaming ack-ack shell had my number on it. We hit the target with everything we had—light bombs, machine guns, and our nose cannons. I made the last run across town, pulled up, and headed after the others. The black smoke nearly choked me when the shell exploded just ahead of the cockpit, and I could feel blood running down my leg as the engine choked and cut out. I glided for a small clearing I had spotted. The clearing was large enough, but I hit a rut that ground-looped the plane.

"When I came to I heard voices, so I listened awhile before I opened my eyes. I could understand enough to know that I was in the home of the former mayor of the small village which we had bombed. They were worrying about the enemy finding me in their house. The mayor's daughter, Loo Toh, persuaded them that it would be safe to keep me there. It took plenty of nursing to get me back on my feet, and Loo Toh was always near when I needed her. When I could walk again we sat in their enclosed garden talking by the hour. It was then I realized Loo Toh loved me. How much she loved me I found out later.

"I tried to analyze my own feelings for her, but it only confused me more. Loo Toh was a beautiful girl by any standard. She was small but perfectly formed, and her face reminded me of the flowers in my mother's garden shining in the morning dew. Her innocence attracted me, yet at the same time it kept me at a distance. A man like me usually adopts a 'love 'em, leave 'em' attitude toward women, but I never touched her."

Rance ceased speaking, and the silence lasted so long I feared he would

not finish the story. The smile which had been on his face since I first saw him was gone. A thin line of muscles writhed along his jaw, and his hands curled into hard fists.

"They came one morning early." He spoke so low we could barely make out the words. "Loo Toh and a servant slipped me out through the garden. They took me to a hiding place on a near-by farm and warned me not to come back until I received word that the enemy had left. They returned to the Toh home to prevent suspicion over their absence. I waited two days and no one came. I could wait no longer. I went back to their home.

"Old Toh was dead. He couldn't stand the torture. Loo Toh was still alive, but I thought then that it would have been better if she had died. Her beauty was gone. The major in charge of the search party had been very artistic with his knife. That wonderful innocence of hers was gone, too, and I think it was that which hurt her most. In spite of seeing her father tortured to death in front of her eyes, in spite of the hell she went through, she never told them where I was hiding.

"After that I fought with a Chinese guerilla group. We did what we could, but I had a personal score to settle which seemed to grow larger every day until the cloud of it covered my mind and hurt deep inside. Occasionally I would go to see Loo Toh, and each time I looked at her ruined beauty the cloud grew darker and more oppressive.

"By some method unknown to me, courier I suppose, the guerillas received word that a plane would land for me in an isolated field on a certain night an hour or two after midnight. I knew I would have to hurry to do what I had to do. A spy of ours working as a typist in the enemy's headquarters had

informed us they were planning a staff meeting of all their highest officers. Their meetings usually ended in a drunken orgy that lasted late into the night.

"I had a hard time convincing the guerilla leader, but at last he agreed to my plan. His men feigned an attack on the north edge of town to confuse their patrols, and I went in by myself from the south. I killed the two guards at the door with my bare hands. I kicked the door open and covered the room with my tommy gun. I watched their faces as they saw their day of reckoning had arrived, and the cloud lightened when the Major tried to hide behind a bamboo settee. I killed them all, but I saved the Major till last so he could see what was coming. I had to leave in a hurry, but I was singing as I ducked and twisted through the narrow streets.

"The plane arrived on schedule; the rescue went off without a hitch. I was back with my own people and I should have been happy, but I wasn't. Something I couldn't pin down bothered me. The war was over and I was home before I knew what was wrong. I had avenged Loo Toh, but I hadn't paid her the debt I owed her for saving my life at such a horrible cost to herself. I decided to marry her.

"From the first I ran into difficulties. I couldn't get permission for her to enter the country, but the real blow came when her long-delayed answer to my letter at last arrived. She wouldn't marry me. She said I didn't need her. She would only be a burden to me. She couldn't help me as a wife should. That should have been my out, but I was all the more determined to marry her. You see—I knew then I loved her.

"She kept refusing all the time I was trying to get papers for her to come

to the U. S., and she refused after some influential friends in Mexico got permission for us to live there. She kept writing that I didn't need her.

"One night I sat in my apartment reading her letters over and over. Every word said that she wouldn't marry me, that I didn't need her, but between each line of that fine script I could see her love peeping through. I read until my eyes were so tired I could barely keep them open. The sky was getting light when I went in the bathroom to wash my eyes with boric acid."

That smile was back. It stole across his face slowly, and he leaned back in the seat. All the tension was gone from his body.

"But it wasn't boric acid I used on my eyes. It was a cleaning solution, a very powerful acid. The pain was terrible. It must have been something like what Loo Toh went through for me. I screamed. I couldn't help it. The people in the next apartment heard me and rushed me to the hospital. I wasn't released until two days ago. While I was there an old flyer friend of mine made a trip to China for me. Loo Toh agreed to marry me. I'm on my way to her now."

Rance rose awkwardly to his feet. "I think I'll go back to the smoker for awhile." The stewardess touched his hand.

"What changed her mind?" The question burst from my lips.

"I'm blind. That cleaning solution ruined my eyes forever. Loo Toh knows I need her now." That odd smile deepened as he turned to let the stewardess guide him down the aisle. She was crying softly.

"What a terrible accident," I murmured sadly.

"Accident!" Cander snorted. "I told you I never miss. He's a man of God!"



Magdalene Lentz writes so imaginatively of "The One Chosen," page 1, that it is not surprising to learn that she leans toward poetry and has had several poems published. It is natural for her to be interested in Bible characters because she has a father (now retired), two brothers, and two brothers-in-law in the ministry. It is also natural for her to be interested in service people, as there were six members of her immediate family in World War II, one a chaplain. In addition, she has worked with several veterans and found them all matured and thinking men. Her conclusion: "I have hope and faith in our country's future."

Wesley Freestone ("The Saintly Sinner," page 3) saw about 33 months of service with the Army Air Force "nursing bombsights" in World War II, part of the time in England with the Eighth Air Force. Probably this experience gave him insight into the gripping story he tells of a flier on the other side of the world.

William Korcik lives in the far west of which he writes in "Immortal Mailman," page 12. He writes that he has always been an avid enthusiast of early American history; "have spent days and weeks tracking down somebody's old haunts. Have sometimes packed in over trails used by the pioneers. It ain't convenient—but it's educational." [The true spirit of scholarly research!]

Mr. Korcik writes further: "Have two critics in family: a constructive

wife and an iconoclastic pooch. Wife goes over pages with sharp pencil; dog tears manuscripts to pieces with sharp teeth. Have respect for dog's judgment since he does not touch literary classics on the shelves."

A veteran of nearly four years' Army service, Mr. Korcik is now attending San Diego State College. Mark our words—with his spirit of research, he is bound to go far (especially if he writes of any more Snowshoe Thompsons)!

Edward L. Van Dyke ("The Mystery of Room 223," page 17) is a native of Delhi, New York, and attended Cornell University. He served in France in World War I and, after operating a country weekly for two years, has been an Elmira newspaperman for 27 years. Author of several dozen short fiction stories, he is now at work on a novel.

Charles E. Wade ("Over the Channel," page 31) went overseas with the 76th Division, 303rd Machine Gun Battalion, in World War I. "There are plenty of frustrated men like Walter Findon," he writes, "who only need a gentle shove in the right direction. The kindness of the narrator of the yarn did more to bolster up the other fellow's morale than all of the lectures and propaganda."

Mary O'Connor ("Hand It to the Handicapped," page 33), herself a shut-in, has led an active enough life to enable her to live on memories. This is exactly what she has no intentions of doing, however. In addition to her writing, of which she has had numerous items published, she is staff artist on three magazines and poetry editor of another. Her poems are often featured on radio programs: her paintings and

(Continued on page 16)

The Peacetime K-9 Corps

BY WILLIAM R. KREH

SLOWLY the man crept toward the high wire fence that surrounded the Government installation. As he made his way forward, the sudden, sharp command "Attack!" shot through the night air. A large brown bundle of fury hurtled through the darkness, and in an instant the man was thrown to the ground and overpowered by the bare-fanged dog.

The man, to his misfortune, had met a member of the peacetime K-9 Corps.

Although it was only a part of the dog's training, and the "prowler" actually was a U. S. soldier, the dog would not release the heavily-padded man until told to do so by his trainer.

The dog was one of the 90 members of the K-9 patrol which have been trained to perform the arduous dusk-to-dawn patrol of the Sandia military installation in New Mexico, where the armed forces develop our country's top-secret weapons.

During the war, the dogs used in the military service were obtained through the "Dogs for Defense" organization, and owners loaned them to the Government for the period of the war, plus six months. They carried messages through the front lines, guarded outposts, and in some cases, actually attacked the enemy soldiers. A few of the dogs were awarded special medals for their heroism on the battlefield.

Few people realize that the K-9 Corps still exists and that the dogs are doing their peacetime job with the same courage and dependableness that they showed during the war years.

Today, the Government acquires the dogs through the Army Quartermaster General by outright purchase from their owners. The price is determined by the age, size and type of dog, and acceptance for the service is based on the adaptability of the animal for the new life he will lead. Average price paid for one of the dogs is \$100.

For his new life in the Army, the dog must overcome one of his basic traits—his affection for man. He must be taught that his handler is the only friend he has. To accomplish this, he is fed, trained, cleaned and worked by only one man. In time he learns that from this man he receives food, praise



For his new life in the Army, the dog must overcome one of his basic traits—his affection for man. (U. S. Armed Forces photograph)



Pfc. Helmuth Frigin, one of the trainers of the war dogs of the K-9 Corps at Sandia Base, engaged in the dangerous task of aggravating one of the war dogs. This aggravating is done in order to develop the dog's ability to attack and to whet his dislike of men other than his handler. Approaching strangers would be met with the same ferocity and disregard for a whip, club or gun. Pfc. Frigin wears a specially designed protective suit made of heavy canvas, leather, and padding. Despite these heavy layers, the dogs tear and chew the garments to ribbons during the periods of their training. The whip is used not to strike the dog, but to flick at his paws and to anger him. (*U. S. Armed Forces photograph*)

and kindness, and that from all others come antagonism, reproach, and danger.

The trainer is the most important member of the team, so Army personnel are carefully chosen for this type of duty. A bad trainer can ruin a good dog. Following the training period, the dog is worked by only this one man throughout his military service. If the trainer is transferred or discharged, the dog is left alone for awhile, and then completely trained again with the new handler.

Throughout the training, the dog must always triumph over an enemy. For example, in teaching the dog to attack, the trainer allows the dog to win always, even though his performance may not be satisfactory. Only by this method does the dog gain con-

fidence in himself. Once this spirit of self-confidence has been realized, the dog is completely fearless and will not hesitate to attack, for his training has shown him that his attempts will be successful. Every effort of the dog is praised, and he is quick to learn that good work is rewarded.

Once trained, there are two general types of assignments which the dog may perform at Sandia Base. He may work with his trainer in patrolling a large area of ground, or he may be enclosed in an area in which no intruders are to be allowed to enter.

On the patrolling assignment, which is usually done at night, the sentry depends on the dog to alert him of prowlers in the area. When patrolling, the dog's low growl is the alerting signal

(Continued on page 34)

Hand-Painted Glassware

BY C. V. JACKSON

MANY hobbyists assume that hand-painted glassware is beyond their skill. But it is really not too difficult and may provide a most satisfactory and profitable hobby.

If you can handle a brush with sufficient ability to color a picture in a child's painting book—where the outline of the illustration is already supplied—genuine hand-painted glassware need have no terrors for you. As with most other crafts, there are one or two tricks of the trade to be learned. To speed you in your brief apprenticeship here are some simple suggestions.

Equipment

Obviously, your first task is to obtain articles which may be suitably decorated in this manner. Glassware that has already been cut or moulded to produce a decorative form does not usually lend itself to hand-painted embellishments. Plain glassware is the better medium with the added advantages of being comparatively inexpensive, and easily secured.

Begin with any piece of discarded glass. Experiment if you like. Learn how to do it and surprisingly soon you will be turning out attractive gifts or articles for sale. Wineglasses, jugs, carafes, tumblers, decanters, butter and preserve dishes, etc., are all suitable for hand-painting.

Color

Choice of the correct color is important. Ordinary artists' oil paints

can be safely employed on vases and general ornamental trinkets which will not require constant washing. For tumblers and tableware generally, however, it is advisable to use one of the art lacquers with a spirit base which can be purchased from most art dealers. These glass-painting lacquers come in a wide range of colors. Purchased in small jars or tins they are inexpensive.

Brushes

The best brush for this pastime is made of sable or squirrel-hair. You will find it false economy to use inferior grades. When you have acquired good brushes, take care of them. If properly cleaned after use they will give long-time service.

Design

Choice of design will be influenced by the size, shape, and intended use of the article to be decorated. You will find unlimited scope for originality. Wineglasses and tumblers for use on social occasions may be decorated by such gay, popular motifs as horses, dogs, huntsmen, dancers, old-time sailing vessels, and characters from history or carnival.

For other types of glassware you may choose more sober decoration. Floral motifs are almost always pleasing. While most hand-painted glassware consists of articles for use on the table, you will find it just as simple to apply these designs to glass-paneled firescreens, mirrors, and wall plaques.

A Trick of the Trade

Having read the paragraph on design, you may have paused to count your artistic blessings and found them wanting. Do not despair. One of those "tricks of the trade" I now present to you—on a 'hand-painted platter.'

Not all of us are able to take brush in hand and without pattern or outline execute an attractive painting. This deficiency can easily be overcome by cutting a suitable illustration from a book, magazine, or greeting card and lightly gumming it on the *inside* of the glass article.

sign. Cleanse the brush and apply the next color, and so on until the pattern is complete.

After a little practice you will find that simple but effective decorations will take only a few minutes to accomplish. Apply the lacquer or paint with even strokes of the brush and work as speedily as possible, since spirit colors in particular dry fairly fast. This tendency is a point in their favor, however, since it enables you to lay one color down next to another without any fear of the two running together. Words of warning: Do not hold the



Hand-painted glassware makes an attractive gift.

What follows is a simple copying exercise, with the outline and colors of the design already supplied. Think how simple a task it becomes to decorate a complete set of glasses with a similar design on each piece of the set.

Before painting, wash thoroughly your glassware to be sure it is free from dirt and grease. When your pattern has been secured in the correct position on the inside of the article, charge your brush with the correct color and apply it to all appropriate parts of the de-

work too close, lest your breath condense on the glass and prevent the color from 'taking' properly. Do not be too ambitious at the start. Choose simple designs which can be copied with bold strokes of the brush.

Try this simple but alluring hobby and soon you will be delighting yourself and surprising your friends—especially if they are unaware of the trick of gumming the pattern on the underside of the glass. . . . I leave it to you whether they are ever enlightened!

Immortal Mailman

BY WILLIAM KORCIK

THE Sierras lay under winter's avalanche. The overland road from Nevada to California had long been covered. In some places the drifts were fifty feet high. Only the silver-green spires of the tall pines remained unhidden. High on the escarpments an angry blizzard raged. In the deep canyons below, the streams were frozen. An icy wind, howling like a hungry wolf, stalked the western slope.

Across this forbidden terrain, the graveyard of trappers, emigrants and miners, who would dare to venture? Yet through the white swirl of snow a speck appeared. Evenly and rapidly it grew larger until it had assumed the stature of a man—a man on skis.

Down the Kingsbury grade he came, a long balancing pole held between his hands, a heavy pack on his back, bent forward as he winged his way over the crusted snow. At the bottom of the hill, where the mountains end and the Carson Valley begins, he paused for a short rest. Those who chanced to be sleighing by saw a broad-shouldered Norseman, six feet tall, a hundred and eighty pounds of muscle and sinew, ruddy-complexioned. There was sweat on his high forehead and his blonde beard was dappled with snow flakes. His deep-set blue eyes showed no fear or suffering.

This Viking of the mountains resumed his journey and soon reached his destination, Genoa, Nevada. As he entered the booming frontier town and started for the post office, children ran to him, shouting joyfully, "It's Snow-

shoe Thompson! He brought the mail again!"

For twenty years—from 1856 to 1876—John A. ("Snowshoe") Thompson "brought the mail again"—and again. For years he provided the only means of communication for Genoa and Carson Valley and the small mining camps of western Nevada.

Once every two weeks he undertook the grueling, perilous, winter trip across the mountains to Placerville, California, and back. It took him three days to reach Placerville, because of the steep western summit, and two days to return. He carried no blankets, overcoat, food that had to be cooked, axe or shovel, and for all but two years was without firearms. Through the winter wilderness he traveled without even a compass, asserting with quiet confidence, "I cannot be lost."

Who was this incredible frontiersman of whom the famous *Overland Monthly*, in describing him as the "pioneer (in the Sierra Nevada Mountains) of the pack train, the stagecoach and the locomotive" said, "On the Pacific Coast his equal in his own peculiar line will probably never again be seen"?

Born in a small Norwegian village in 1827, John A. Thompson was ten years old when his family came to the United States. For fourteen years he lived in the middle west with his parents. At the age of 24 he left home to make himself a fortune in California gold. But luck was not with him and after two disappointing years he put aside his pick and sluice pan

for a piece of land in the Sacramento Valley. His otherwise placid ranching days were disturbed by the accounts he read in the local newspapers of the insurmountable difficulties in getting the mail across the Sierras once the snow had fallen.

The rapid settlement of California, following Marshal's discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill near Coloma, brought a clamor for direct communication with the east. In the spring of 1851 a mail route between San Francisco and Salt Lake City, passing through the Carson Valley (then the most beaten path to California), was established. But when winter came every attempt to continue operation was frustrated by the deep snow and extreme cold. After several unsuccessful tries the mail was rerouted through a much longer path.

The following winter the route was even more circuitous: from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles by way of the Old Spanish Trail and thence by steamer to San Francisco. The thousands of people by-passed in Carson Valley had to wait until May for news of the outside world.

In a last attempt to find some effective means of bridging the snow-bound gap between the eastern and western slopes of the Sierras, men were hired to make the journey on skis (then called snowshoes), each trip to take one month. Sometimes they came through, more often they were turned back. The misfortunes that befell them made woeful reading.

In 1855 John Thompson put aside his newspaper and resolved, as the *Overland Monthly* put it, to "beard the storm king in his own mountain fastness and strongholds."

With the memories of his boyhood in the Norwegian hills as his only guide, he carved himself, from a live

oak growing on his land, a pair of sturdy snowshoes. They were ten feet long and weighed twenty-five pounds, the heaviest skis ever worn in the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

When the snow fell he went up to Placerville, then known as Hangtown, to demonstrate to the company holding the mail contract that he was capable of taking on the titanic task of carrying the mail the 90 miles to Genoa—and the 90 miles back. In January of 1856 he made his first trip. For that year and the next he was paid with government funds; for the eighteen years after that he did not receive a cent of state or federal money.

As the years went by his bag grew heavier—one winter it averaged over one hundred pounds per trip. The people of Carson Valley came to lean upon him heavily for their needs. He carried medicine for the doctors, notions for the housewives, merchandise for the storekeepers and equipment for the miners. Part of the printing press which turned out the illustrious "Territorial Enterprise," on which Mark Twain later worked, was carried by Thompson across the mountains.

Thompson was famous for his knowledge of the Sierras—his guides were the rocks and trees by day and the stars by night—and for rescuing people lost in the snow. Since he was a quiet man who never talked about what he had done, it remained for those he saved to tell the tales of his epic deeds.

More than one farmer, rancher or miner, isolated by the bitter winter, owed his life to the mailman who came across the snowdrifts with food and medicine. He made frequent trips to lonely bachelor shacks to treat the sick who would surely have died had not Thompson cared for them.

His most thrilling rescue was a feat

of stamina and bravery that has never been equalled in the history of the Sierras.

James Sisson, a mountain settler, fell ill and subsequently was snowed in by the heavy drifts. He tried desperately to break through but failed. His food and fuel ran out and his feet froze. He had not eaten for five days when Thompson found him half alive.

Quickly Snowshoe built a fire with wood gathered in the surrounding forest, gave Sisson all the provisions he had, made the suffering man as comfortable as possible, and hurried to Placerville for aid.

He returned with some friends who helped Thompson build a sled out of twigs and boughs and push and pull and carry Sisson to Genoa. There some doctors looked at Sisson's feet, decided to amputate, and found they had no chloroform. So back to Placerville flew Thompson. No chloroform there, either, so down to Sacramento, more than forty miles away. When he had found the precious drug he turned, still without rest, and hastened back to Genoa. Without him, Sisson would have lost not his legs but his life.

Each new problem was no more than a test for Thompson's ingenuity. Once when the day's going had been exceptionally rough and he felt cold and tired, he made camp at the foot of a big pine tree from which the snow had been blown away at the roots by the wind. Into this pit he threw a supply of fuel and some spruce boughs for a bed. He dug a hole in the wall of the snow surrounding the pit and built a fire against the side of the tree. The heat of the fire blew back and he slept comfortably all night. He adopted this form of housing often after that.

On only one occasion was Thompson

ever frightened. In 1857 he came across six big timber wolves digging at the carcass of an animal. "As I approached," Thompson told the well-known writer, Dan De Quille, years later, "the wolves left the carcass, and in a single file came out a distance of about 25 yards toward my line of march. The leader of the pack wheeled and sat down on his haunches. When the next one came up he did the same thing, and so on until all were seated in line. They acted just like trained soldiers. I pledge you my word I thought the devil was in them! In the old country I had read of 'man wolves' and these acted as if of that supernatural kind. To look at them gave me cold chills, and I had a queer feeling about the roots of my hair. What most frightened me was the confidence they displayed and the regular order in which they moved. But I dared not show the least sign of fear, so on I went.

"Just as I was opposite them, and but 25 or 35 yards away, the leader of the pack threw back his head, and uttered a loud prolonged howl. All the others of the pack did the same. 'Ya-hoo! Ya-hoo, hoo oo!' they cried all together. A more doleful and terrifying sound I never heard. I thought it meant my death. The awful cry rang across the silent valley, was echoed by the hills and re-echoed far away among the surrounding mountains.

"Every moment I expected to see the whole pack dash at me. I would just then have given all I possessed to have had my revolver in my hand. I did not alter my gait nor change my line of march. I passed the file of wolves as a general moves along in front of his soldiers. The ugly brutes uttered but their first fearful howl. When they saw that their war cry did not cause me to alter my course nor make

me run, they feared to come after me, so let me pass.

"They sat still and watched me hungrily for some time, but when I was far away I saw them all turn about and go back to the carcass. Had I turned back, or tried to run away, when they marched out to meet me, I am confident the whole pack would have been upon me in a moment. They all looked it. My show of courage intimidated them and kept them back."

Three years later Thompson almost lost his life in an encounter with the Piute Indians. Of the 105 Nevadans who had marched to Pyramid Lake, Nevada, to battle the ravaging Piutes, 76 were killed. Thompson was pursued and probably would have been caught had not a stray, unsaddled horse, bolting from the scene of conflict, crossed his path. He leaped upon it and rode it bareback to safety. He often remarked he wished the valley had been covered with snow and that he had had his snowshoes.

Thompson's speed and strength on skis mark him as the greatest winter athlete in the recorded history of the mighty Sierras. In his forties he jumped 183 feet without a break and ran a distance of 1,600 feet in 21 seconds. At 48 he often carried on his back a quarter of a beef one and a half miles to a mine situated in a canyon described as "straight up."

Apart from his fantastic mail-carrying career, he was a man of enterprise and versatility. He started a sleigh coach line across the mountains when the stages couldn't get through, made important contributions to the Valley's irrigation system, and altered the course of several Sierra streams so that Carson Valley might receive more water.

In 1874, nearing the end of his carrier



To look at them gave me cold chills, and I had a queer feeling about the roots of my hair.

days, Thompson traveled to Washington, D.C., with a petition signed by hundreds of people who knew him. The petition requested the Government to pay him six thousand dollars for his many winters of faithful service.

In the nation's capital he received nothing more definite than vague promises. These, to the shame of the country he helped develop, were never fulfilled.

Two years after his return from his unsuccessful mission he died. He was 49 years old. His friends and neighbors buried him in the old cemetery at Genoa, facing the mountains he had conquered and loved. The children of Genoa, for whom he had often brought sweets and presents, purchased for his grave a headstone of pure white marble. On it, above the name of John A. Thompson, is the symbol of his fame: a pair of skis.

The legend of Snowshoe Thompson, which grew mostly by word of mouth

as one generation passed on the story of his prolific and remarkable deeds to the next, became front-page material in 1946 when famous skiers of the western states gathered near the Norseman's old haunts to participate in the Snowshoe Thompson Memorial Cross-Country Race. This event has been continued each year.

The cross-country records made have been impressive but old-timers, who listened spellbound to the stories their grandfolds told on a cold winter's night, swear that Snowshoe Thompson—mail bag and all—could have easily beaten the best young whippersnappers on skis today.

Of Uncle Sam's mailmen it has been inscribed: "Not snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." Of Snowshoe Thompson it can be added: "Nor mountains hitherto unsurpassable when he heard the cry of need."

THE LOW-DOWN *(Continued from page 7)*

pen sketches have hung in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C., and other exhibits. She holds three poet laureateships, is a member of several writers' and poets' societies, and has sung with the Cleveland Symphony in a number of operas. Her poem, "Great Music," appeared on a cover of THE LINK recently. See what I mean?

When we asked M. Lovina Cooper ("The Pine," page 38) for a little biographical information to give you readers, she declared that the things she has left undone, the things she ought to have done, would have made a better story. But we believe she has a good one as

it is—of social work in Missouri and work with paroled girls in Massachusetts training schools. She is now interested in self-employment, which includes writing. We hope she'll find plenty of time for it.

Herbert E. Smith ("Buddy, It's Cold Outside," page 35) really believes in what he is telling you. Retiring after 27 years' active service with the Army, he is now a free-lance writer of detective and sports fiction—"and still eating my heart out for another chance to don The Uncle's O. D. livery." Any of you readers with a gripe about the Army, see "Chaplain" Smith.

The Mystery of Room 223

BY EDWARD L. VAN DYKE

THE young man in Hospital Room 209 had been fidgeting for hours. His problem—one that had nothing to do with his ailment—was irritating him no end, and today he was determined to do something about it.

Who was Wilbur, the occupant of Room 223?

For several days he, Bill Patton, had inquired of everyone coming into his room. All had professed complete ignorance of Wilbur—and even of Room 223.

Patient 209, by now, was convinced that his queries had fallen on evasive soil. There must be something about Room 223—and Wilbur—that he wasn't supposed to know. Why?

The young man snapped his fingers in sudden determination. He, Bill Patton, was a lawyer who during the war had served two years with Intelligence. He was trained to dig up facts—and facts he would obtain.

Almost viciously he pressed the buzzer beside his pillow.

Swishing inquiringly into the semi-darkened room was a young probationer. In her direction, Bill Patton peered uncertainly.

"Oh, you're Miss Brown," he said at length. "Where's Nurse Carr?"

"Gone for the rest of the day," replied the girl.

The patient briefly digested this information. "Do you suppose an orderly could get something for me—a toothbrush, say?" he asked.

When Miss Brown nodded, the patient appeared relieved. "Look, young lady," said he. "My wallet is in the top

drawer of that stand—would you pick out a five dollar bill for me?"

The probationer bustled about to obey, chattering volubly as she moved across the room.

"I think it's just wonderful about your eyes—that you're going to be able to see as well as ever," she said. "Dr. Hatfield is marvelous, isn't he? There's the money," she added, placing the bill in his hand. "Anything else you want, Mr. Patton?" she asked.

The patient sighed wearily. "Yes, Miss Brown, there is," said he. "Send in the orderly, will you please?"

When the male attendant came, the man on the bed beckoned him to his side. Bill Patton whispered a request for certain information, carefully and confidentially to be obtained; the orderly pocketed the money, promising to return in a short time.

When the man's steps faded away, Bill Patton grinned, turned on his side and dozed, to dream that he was driving his car again, with Nurse Alice Carr at his side.

Bill had been most unhappy and petulant on the day Nurse Carr had launched her note-writing suggestion. His eyes for days had been covered with bandages; complete recovery from his operation was still a matter of doubt, and Bill was worried and despondent.

"Confound it, Nurse," he had growled, "I'm going plain nuts, lying here day after day with nothing to do!"

Nurse Carr had been adjusting his pillow at the time. "You might," she

suggested, "let me write a few letters for you. I'd be glad to do it."

Patton had snorted disdainfully.

"To whom, pray?" he had demanded.

"My parents are dead and I have no brothers or sisters. And my office is closed while I'm here."

The nurse's voice had been gentle, hesitating. "Your wife—or girl friend, perhaps?"

An awkward silence had followed that. "I have neither," Bill Patton replied at last. "Oh, there was a girl, once—but let's skip that. It's all over now."

Nurse Carr had patted his pillow and to Bill it seemed almost like a caress. "There is," she whispered, "a very lonely boy in Room 223."

Bill Patton's fingers had tapped a thoughtful rhythm on the bed. Some poor kid, perhaps, and like himself, without a father and mother. Perhaps he could cheer up this little fellow—make him more eager to get well. Why not try it?

Thus it was that Bill Patton had dictated to Nurse Carr his initial message:

"Dear Chap in 223: I am Room 209, like yourself, perhaps, bored and tired of being in a hospital. Maybe you'd like to know what's the matter with me. Well, I went on a vacation trip in my car and collided with—believe it or not—a cow on a dark stretch of road. I hit the windshield—my eyes have been bandaged ever since. I only hear the things you see—people walking around; doctors and nurses talking in low voices—the trays coming and going."

There had been more, in similar vein.

When Nurse Carr the next day reported the arrival of a reply, Bill had felt strangely moved.

He was bored, too, confessed Room 223. His legs were in a cast; it would be many days, he was afraid, before he

could leave his room. He could, however, see and read. That helped—he could readily understand how trying temporary blindness could be.

Bill Patton tried to interrupt as Nurse Carr read on; he wanted to ask a question, but Nurse Carr gave him no chance.

"Failure to see," the nurse read on, "might have its compensations to an idled mind. Probably you speculate a good deal how your doctors and nurses look. Do you, Room 209, know for instance that Dr. Hatfield can wiggle his ears at will? Do you know you and I have the same nurse in the morning—that this nurse has freckles and a supercilious nose?"

Bill Patton sat up in bed, wildly waving his arms. Hidden beneath the bandages were expressions of doubt and suspicion.

"Hey," he cried, "what's going on here? That's no little boy writing big words like that. Just how old is this 'very lonely boy' in Room 223?"

Bill thought he could detect some unfathomable form of emotion in Nurse Carr's voice.

"Why," she replied in strangely muffled tones, "Wilbur's about thirty, I guess."

Bill Patton was furious. "Nurse Carr, I could wring your neck!" he shouted. "I thought I was writing to some little boy! Who in thunderation is Wilbur?"

Nurse Carr's voice was oddly choked. "He'll never leave that room, I'm afraid," Bill heard her say.

Bill, mentally picturing a hopeless invalid, felt ashamed. "Oh, I see," he said. "Well, in that case, I'll answer his note."

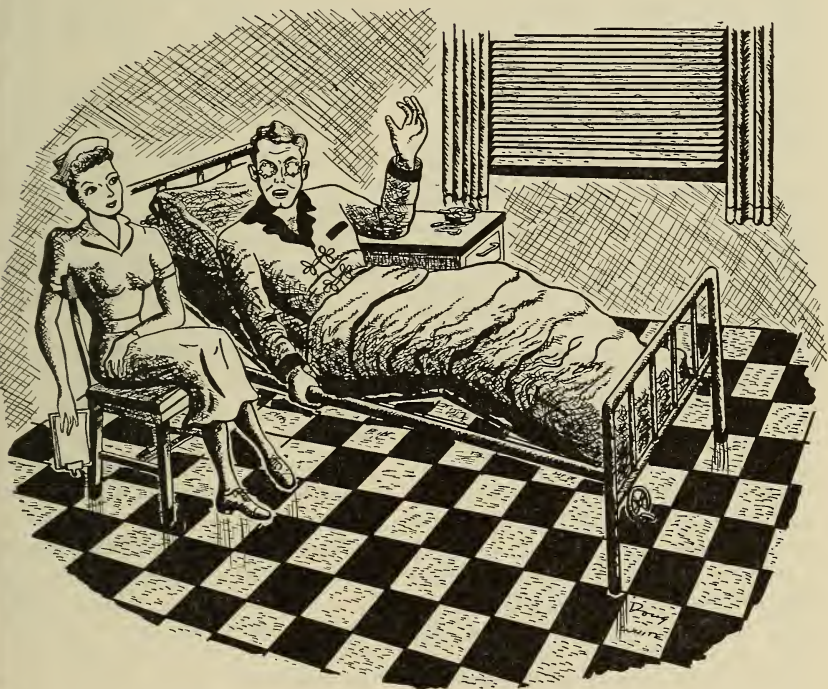
Bill's second note lacked the warmth of the first. Room 223, he said, ought to be more careful of what he was writing. For all he knew, Bill pointed

out, the nurse Room 223 was describing might be Nurse Carr, who indubitably, even if she had freckles and a supercilious nose, was a fine nurse. With a touch of reckless malice, Bill added, "and probably some day she'll make some man very happy."

Room 223 never answered this com-

darn it, he was jealous of this Wilbur. Otherwise, why would he have paid an orderly for information?

Bill, because of his injured eyes, had never seen Nurse Carr until this morning—and then, in a blurred fashion. Yet now he was acutely aware that, during all the past weeks of pain and



"Hey," he cried, "what's going on here? That's no little boy writing big words like that. Just how old is this 'very lonely boy' in Room 223?"

munication. It puzzled Bill, then whetted his suspicions. Was Room 223—this guy Wilbur—in love with Nurse Carr—taking advantage of her because she, a woman, might be vulnerable to his need for motherly sympathy?

Bill hated himself for his sullen thoughts toward someone whose physical condition could be pathetic. Yet,

fear of blindness, the presence of Nurse Carr in the room had been deliciously disturbing. Her hands had a cool softness, giving out disquieting electrical effects; her starched uniform gave forth a clean, almost sensuous crackle, and he had noted the alluring if faint perfume of her hair when she had been near.

Who was Wilbur, and did he mean anything to Nurse Carr?

The orderly tiptoed in then and whispered his report. After he had gone, Bill sat up in bed a long time, quietly whistling every catchy tune he could remember.

Next morning, Bill's mending eyesight was almost normal and the enticing vision that was Nurse Carr, her white cap perched jauntily atop her golden hair—very delectable indeed in her fresh-starched uniform—made Patton's heart pound madly. Cagily, however, he professed that everything in the room seemed blurred and confusing.

"I can't even see what you look like, Nurse Carr," he insisted. "Will you help me write Room 223 a final message?"

Nurse Carr obviously was disturbed as she reached for what appeared to be a notebook.

"Dear Wilbur," dictated Bill Patton, "we have had a nice correspondence, you and I—but we are all washed up from now on. For now I know who you are—or rather—who you are not."

Blandly Bill ignored Nurse Carr's confusion and blushing face.

"Now," he went on, "I am going to let you in on a little secret. For some time, I have been increasingly interested in a girl—a girl I first had

thought meant something to you. She is a very dear, charming young lady, with a disturbing imagination and a great sense of humor—although it's not so humorous now. Her few stray freckles, frankly, are most appealing to me and her nose I find not at all supercilious.

"She has blonde hair and—let's see, now—beautiful hands, skin and teeth. So I am hereby advising you, Wilbur of Room 223, that I am going to ask this young lady—my nurse, no less, to marry me."

Nurse Carr's unused pencil fell to the floor. Frantically groping for it, she found her hands imprisoned in those of her patient, a handsome young man no longer sightless and petulant.

Bill held her very close for a moment. Then, realizing this was highly irregular conduct for a nurse on duty, Alice Carr broke away.

"Will the make-believe nurse-secretary of Room 223, some day soon, marry Room 209?" demanded Bill Patton.

Nurse Alice Carr was adjusting her ruffled hair and cap, but her eyes were starry indeed.

"Being secretary to Wilbur—the key to the door of a hospital linen closet—has a very poor future," she whispered. "The answer is 'yes.'"

The Dutch have seen and heard their name used in a sense other than complimentary for 300 years. There is Dutch courage, for example, which implies that it has been borrowed from a fortifying bottle. A Dutch treat is no treat at all, as you know if you've ever shared one. To be talked to by your Dutch uncle is to get your ears pinned back, but good, by one who can't be bothered with tact. All these and many other derogatory terms involving the Dutch may be traced indirectly to the bitter rivalry for sea supremacy that existed between Holland and Great Britain in the 18th century. Mutual belittlement was all part of the deadly game. Try using these phrases around your Netherlands friends today, and you may find yourself in Dutch quicker than you can say Jack Robinson.

—William J. Murdoch.

Fighting with Spaghetti

BY PEARL P. PUCKETT

A LOT of stories have come out of World War II but nary a word about Bill Hayes' spaghetti. And what a shame it is, too, because the yarn should go down in history for your children, grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren to read when they want to whooper up and taunt tomorrow's crop of dictators.

Bill Hayes is just a hard-working electronics engineer who never took a cooking lesson in all his life. He is one of the reasons why Hitler made a grave mistake when he chose to wage mechanical warfare against Uncle Sam, for the spaghetti Bill cooked up packed a wallop more devastating than Hitler was able to devise in the twenty-five years he took to prepare for the war. Then, too, it was ironic that Bill's spaghetti should write history in the land that made spaghetti famous, for sunny Italy is at least a part of the territory where Bill's spaghetti helped shape the destiny of the world.

With their eyes still wide in amazement, veteran production men admit that spaghetti is certainly a "natural" for the manufacturer of electronic tubes. It not only cut by more than 75 per cent the time required to assemble certain tube filaments urgently needed for war implements, but it also reduced the need for critical steel and was far more suitable for the purpose.

For instance, a stick of spaghetti placed inside a tiny wire coil supported it while it was being welded. A piece of steel formerly was used as the support,

and it was difficult to remove. Spaghetti can be burned out in a flash.

Bill's spaghetti was no accident; it's a saga of brains coupled with a grim determination to whip the stuffin's out of the Axis—a saga of a young Westinghouse electronics engineer who dared to do things that other folks thought bordered on the ridiculous. Bill was assigned to break the "bottleneck" in the electronic tube war industry. The situation seemed pretty hopeless. Wire filaments for many tubes were coiled in the shape of a small spring three-quarters of an inch long. When each coil was being welded to the rest of the tube mechanism, a steel piece about as thick as a seven-penny nail was inserted inside the spring coil to support it and keep it in accurate alignment. This steel nail had to be split with a saw before it was inserted in the coil. Without the split the nail was difficult to remove after the welding job, because the coil tended to tighten around it. Sometimes in removing the steel piece the coil was jarred and had to be realigned. The whole job was troublesome and time-consuming at best—and it was important that these tubes roll off the assembly line at a rapid pace if we were to make up for the twenty-five years we had lost while Hitler was rearming.

Ever since Bill was old enough to start tearing apart his own cradle, he has been doing things—using his own brain cells and initiative. Tearing down the family clocks to get "stuff" to fix his bike and skates is a small example.

For a while he had a regular repair shop where kids from all over the neighborhood took their precious possessions to be made over and patched up "good as new." Young Bill knew all the answers, knew just how to fix a flat with a chunk of gum and a piece cut out of his father's rubber boot. He knew how to make the "best danged" cold-water paste with a little flour and water snatched from Mother's kitchen. He knew all about homemade gadgets, too. His ambition at one time was to own a million lemonade stands. Starting the first stand near the zoo one hot Sunday afternoon, he made some really BIG dough—\$1.25 in all—and embarrassed his mother almost to tears. Bill ran out of straws—had his first experience with spaghetti after having sent his copartner legging home to get a box of spaghetti from his mother's pantry. The big merchant discovered that his customers much preferred to drink their lemonade from the glass.

Well, when everything else failed to "break the bottleneck," it was quite

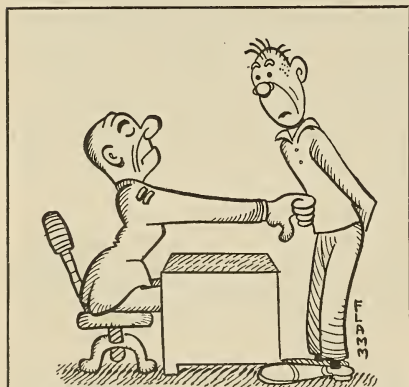
natural for Bill A. Hayes to turn to spaghetti. You just can't stymie American youth with a mind like Bill Hayes'.

"After trying about everything else, I got down to spaghetti," Bill explained modestly. "We now insert a little stick of spaghetti where the steel piece used to go. After the filament is welded, electric current is passed through the coil to remove any impurities in the metal and this burns up the spaghetti in a flash. No spaghetti—no removal problem. It's a cinch."

This assembly operation formerly required about five minutes for each tube filament. Now that spaghetti is used instead of steel, the job is done in less than a quarter of this time.

Bill says that his idea didn't take final shape all at once: "I thought of spaghetti but decided to visit a manufacturer and find out how accurately it can be produced with regard to exact size. I found that spaghetti can be made with fair precision. It is strong enough not to break if handled carefully and can be machined on a lathe. For our experiments, I put a stick of spaghetti on a lathe and machined it to the correct diameter. We have now supplied the spaghetti maker with a die to enable him to produce sticks the correct diameter for our tube operations. From now on the use of spaghetti is a permanent practice by our company."

Bill's spaghetti saved not only thousands of lives by getting war implements to the boys in time, but precious steel, and enabled us to produce over 50 per cent more filaments—at the same time allowing assembly operators to spend part of their time on other production jobs. It is now being used extensively in the assembly of filaments for various types of tubes for a peacetime America.



At Green Bay, Wisconsin, AF examiners turned down Donald Fuehler because of his feet. Fuehler then walked home to Luxembourg, Wisconsin—31 miles away.

The Horizon of Worship

FEBRUARY 4-10

BY ROBERT CASPAR LINTNER

When we think of worship we naturally think of God, but we ought to think also of our fellows. For it was the Quaker poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, who gave us these challenging words: "To worship rightly is to love each other."

But how often we overlook these horizontal aspects of worship—the *horizon*, we might say, of worship!

Don't you remember, however, that Jesus never overlooked it? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." (Luke 10:27) *That is a wide horizon for worship! And God expects nothing less than that!*

Jesus gave us another wonderful lesson in this, though most of us must have passed it over without seeing it in this light. It was on a day when Jesus was talking plainly to His hearers about the gravity of being angry with our brethren without cause, and He added significantly: "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; *first* be reconciled to thy brother, and *then* come and offer thy gift." (Matthew 5:23, 24)

Of course! For if our brother has anything against us it is probably our

fault in some serious degree and we therefore have an obstruction on the horizon of our worship! We must remove it! We must look up this fellow who shuts off our clear view of God. We must use human speech to human ears before we make our peace with God.

There is a reason back of this. Jesus gave it to us plainly: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matthew 6:14, 15) *Why is this true?*

Another horizontal aspect of worship is social justice. John, writing long ago to early Christians, declared: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." (I John 3:14) *Why is this true? How does this challenge us today?*

And another horizontal element in true worship of God is our service to our fellows. Why is this a two-way street? "Wherefore comfort [or encourage] yourselves *together*, and edify [or build up] *one another*, even as also ye do." (I Thessalonians 5:11) *Why should we maintain good works?* (Titus 3:8)

Let's keep *our* horizons clear!

Why Better Race Relations?

TOPIC TALK FOR FEBRUARY 11-17

BY ROBERT CASPAR LINTNER

The second Sunday in February has come to be an annual reminder of our need, as Americans and as Christians, to maintain better relations between the races in our country.

Why should we try to make these relations better? First of all, because we are brothers through the creative power of God our Heavenly Father. Is it scientifically true that He has made us all of one blood? (Acts 17:24-29) Does this shame our failure to measure up to our brotherhood? (Malachi 2:10) Why did Jesus stress this fact also? (Matthew 23:9) Just as we shrink from bringing shame upon an earthly parent, we should hesitate to dishonor our Heavenly Father by showing ourselves unbrotherly to those of any other race. He loves us too much for that!

We should recognize, in the second place, that we are all brothers through the redemptive love of our Saviour. Why should a Christian show a special concern in this matter of true brotherliness? Listen: "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." (Matthew 23:8) What did Paul say that reminds us of our brotherhood before the cross of Christ? (I Corinthians 8:9-13) What obligations are laid upon us by our brotherhood in Him? "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2)

This reminds us that we are brethren in our common obligations to be better Christians and better citizens because

of our Christianity. Should this begin with compassion and brotherly love? (I Peter 3:8, 9) What other things should we add to this list of virtues that we are obligated to manifest?

Are there limits to what brotherliness demands of us? (II Thessalonians 3:6) But aren't there times when our Christian obligations demand great loyalty to one who does not seem to deserve it at all? Why?

Last summer I talked with a distinguished Negro educator. As we spoke of the future of struggling colleges for Negroes in the South, he made the discerning comment that Russia and the Communists in this country will not fail to make capital of our racial tensions wherever they occur. We who are Christians owe it to our country and to our Christ to try to do everything we can to heal these sore spots and do away with their causes!

And the Negro will do his full share in this great work if he has the necessary education and spiritual qualities and if he has the help of other Christians! I know a Negro college president who has vastly improved his institution in the years he has headed it. Another Negro who heads a college for his people in another state has raised almost a million dollars for that school. Proud old Harvard has added Ralph Bunche to its faculty. And so they march forward.

*Let's all work for brotherhood!
God works with us!*

Our Spiritual Reservoirs

TOPIC TALK FOR FEBRUARY 18-24

BY ROBERT CASPAR LINTNER

Another Lenten season comes to us and we should be grateful for the increased emphasis it places upon our spiritual needs. All too easily we remember the claims of our physical bodies for food and refreshment and clothing and shelter, but we are not so likely to think of our spiritual needs and provide for them. *We need ample reservoirs of spiritual grace and power.*

What are some of these reservoirs that are so vital to us?

Perhaps the easiest to think of is a treasury of Bible verses, not so much as stored-up knowledge as a stocked larder to which we can turn when hungry and famished. Don't you remember an hour when you were sorely tempted or burdened and you were able to recall a Bible verse that gave you inner strength again? How did Jesus quote Scripture when He was tempted? (Luke 4:1-13) What a wonderful source of power for us!

Wouldn't it be helpful if we were to store our minds with such an arsenal of spiritual power, by reading daily from the Bible? Why don't we do it?

We can find similar spiritual strength and grace by gradually forming habits of prayer. Whatever the way in which we pray, and at whatever time, we gain spiritual strength by praying in the proper spirit of worship and devotion. "Prayer changes things." And you and I have many things that need to be changed! If we form the habit of turning to God in humble prayer many times

each day we shall discover that we are slowly building up an inner reservoir from which to gain strength and refreshment and grace and peace when we need help greater than our own!

Why should we pray often? "The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." (Romans 10:12)

And is prayer a sort of sober drudgery? Listen: "Ask, and ye shall receive, *that your joy may be full.*" (John 16:24) Why do we always underestimate the sheer joy that prayer may bring us?

How often should we pray? (Colossians 4:2; I Thessalonians 5:17) Let's not stint ourselves in the inflow of power through praying!

And there is another vast reservoir that is filled to overflowing as we turn again and again to God, in unpremeditated, perfectly spontaneous seeking of His presence and His power, as naturally as a child turns to the mother in whose arms he nestles. Instead of talking so much about seeking God, we should remind ourselves again and again of His encircling love and His mercy that has no bounds and His power that knows no limits but our own faith. How do you think we can best learn to rely upon Him? Can He really meet our needs in any hour of any day? "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1) Let's find Him oftener!

This vast reservoir of inner spiritual power can be ours if we rely upon Him!

Let's remember this each day!

A More Constant Hunger

TOPIC TALK FOR FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 3

BY ROBERT CASPAR LINTNER

A man who had fallen away from an active Christian life once spoke these wistful words to a preacher: "No man who has ever known the Lord ever loses the hunger for God in his heart. He carries in his heart a more constant and poignant hunger for God than any hobo ever carries in his body for bread."

Haven't you discovered this too? It is never His will that we should lose Him completely out of our lives. He loves us too much for that. He made us for Himself. He wants us to have eternal fellowship with Him. So we have this divinely-implanted hunger and thirst for Him. We are so made that nothing else will ever completely satisfy our inmost cravings for Him who created us!

So we should seek to have a closer communion with Him, every hour and eternally!

How should we seek to find Him? (Psalm 119:10) With our *whole* heart in the quest! Why is it so difficult for us to be sure of His presence? (Job 23:3)

Why is our craving for Him so natural—as natural as the craving of a deer for water? (Psalm 42:1)

Is it true that we must seek Him *properly* in order to find Him? Why? (Proverbs 1:28-31)

But isn't it equally true that we shall discover His will when we seek Him aright? (I Chronicles 28:9)

How does His pardon come to us? (II Chronicles 30:18, 19; John 3:16)

Do you think God requires that we

be worthy to find Him, or only that we be penitent and hungry and thirsty for Him? Isn't it true that any thirsting soul can come to Him freely and experience His grace and His forgiving love? (Revelation 22:17)

Should we seek Him in far places or near at hand? (Acts 17:27, 28) We know, of course, that it would transform our daily lives if we were to go about our work as if He were watching us and helping us—as He will if we ask and expect it of Him! We can make all of our work doubly real and doubly effective if we climax it with this sort of sacred expectation of His presence and His help. Let's try this inspiring exercise of faith each day! It can be tremendously effective in giving us spiritual strength and poise. It will help us to find richer spiritual fulfillment in our Christian lives each day. Try it and see!

An Old Testament writer declared that they who seek the Lord understand all things. (Proverbs 28:5b) Why does our devout search for God help us to acquire a satisfying and enlightening philosophy of life? It helps us immeasurably if we can gain a broad outlook on life and a truly Christian perspective. Our faith helps us to gain such an outlook and such a perspective, and they in turn strengthen our faith!

Why is He our greatest hunger, and what will happen if we seek Him first? (Matthew 6:33)

Let's satisfy this hunger!

Bowing to God's Will

TOPIC TALK FOR MARCH 4-10

BY ROBERT CASPAR LINTNER

Does God demand unflinching obedience of us? (Deuteronomy 5:32, 33) Why does He desire us to obey Him? Hasn't He a right to expect our obedience if we recognize His divine fatherhood, His creative genius, His guiding love and His knowledge of all our abilities and possibilities and weaknesses? Why?

Listen to these words that the great prophet Jeremiah declared as God's words: "But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, *that it may be well* with you." (Jeremiah 7:23)

Those are forthright words and they are worthy of the God who watches over us in justice and mercy and love! *We should not trifle with Him!*

Why is our obedience to His will more pleasing to Him than any gifts that we could ever offer Him? (I Samuel 15:22) Wouldn't you feel this way also toward your child? No amount of pretty lip-service and no halfhearted gifts of *things* can ever soothe a parent's wounded love when a child disobeys and flouts the love lavished upon him.

What satisfactions do we find when we obey His commandments? Why is it that we have a sense of well-being after we do what we feel God desires us to do? Isn't this the best kind of reward for good deeds? What do you think about this?

Why does God expect us to be obe-

dient also to the faith of Jesus? (Revelation 14:12; I Corinthians 16:13) Why is this expectation never unreasonable? Can you think of God as unreasonable? Doesn't He expect us to be reasonable always, as well as obedient?

How does our obedience to God show our wisdom and our understanding? (Psalm 111:10) Isn't it true that we are to some degree fools if we disobey God, even in small matters? Why is this true? If we agree that the man who denies the existence of God is a fool, then surely anyone who tries to ignore Him and wound Him by not doing His will is a fool also. *Let's remember this!*

Is it true that our obedience is the real test of our love for our Lord? (John 14:15) Surely we could not expect it to be otherwise!

But isn't it true also that our obedience is so deserved that we find real joy in serving and obeying God? (Psalm 119:127-129) This surely is as it ought to be!

Don't you remember how Jesus boldly condemned the lip-service of His hearers when they failed to obey Him? Hear Him: "And *why* call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46) *Why, indeed?*

But how often you and I must have disappointed Him! Sometimes we have flouted the will of God in sheer defiance, but more often we have merely been lazy and negligent, or very halfhearted in serving grudgingly!

Let's do better than ever before!

Friends Are Like That!

TOPIC TALK FOR MARCH 11-17

BY ROBERT CASPAR LINTNER

Henry Ford once wrote some words that shout a real message to us: "He is your best friend who brings out of you the best that is in you." *The best that is in you!* A true friend, the only kind that is worthy of your closest friendship, will not want to do less than that—intentionally. For friends are like that!

Our friends are our choicest acquaintances; we choose them; and we should try to be worthy of them.

Ralph Waldo Emerson reminded us of something when he said: "The only way to have a friend is to *be* one."

And an old sage long ago told us even more when he wrote: "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." (Proverbs 18:24) Have you had such an experience? Or have you been worthy of having that experience? Usually it doesn't come unless we are worthy!

But friendship is not a quick and easy matter at its best. Friends need to ripen as fruits ripen and as grains mature. George Washington once wrote these words in a letter: "True friendship is a plant of slow growth and must undergo and withstand the shocks of adversity before it is entitled to the appellation." Don't you agree with him? Do you know a short cut, such as sharing a common danger or joining forces in order to do a kindly deed together?

But we owe it to ourselves to be careful in choosing friends. Perhaps Socrates was thinking of this when he

wrote: "Be slow to fall into friendship; but when thou art in continue firm and constant." Just so! The wrong kind of friend, if you take him for your closest and most trusted confidant, may bring you incalculable harm if he has an evil mind and a foul tongue and no regard for decency and honor. We owe it to ourselves to shun such a person unless we are able to influence *him* to be at his best!

But the *best* friend—the one on whom we feel we can depend most and to whom we would willingly give our best—is the fellow who brings out *the best* that is in *us*!

And our best Friend, Christ, does *that* for *us*! *Let's recognize this!*

He is not above taking us at our worst, if we will come to Him. Do you remember how they criticized Him long ago by saying that he was the friend of publicans and sinners? Of course He was! For He wanted to save them! He wanted to bring out *the best* in them! *And He did that!*

Doesn't a real friend hunt us up to give comfort? Don't you recall how He did that? (John 14:18) His earthly life showed us what true friends are and the lengths to which they will go to bring comfort in sorrow, companionship in loneliness and help in any hour of need.

Then He called *us* friends! Don't you remember that? (John 15:15)

He *is* our *best* friend! But are *we* *His* friends?

Let's prove it!

The Measure of Pardon

TOPIC TALK FOR MARCH 18-24

BY ROBERT CASPAR LINTNER

It was about three centuries ago that Richelieu's opponent, La Rochefoucauld, declared: "We pardon in the degree that we love." That is one of the greatest of truths, and it shines with special beauty for us as we approach Good Friday again and behold the Man of Sorrows on the middle cross on Golgotha. If ever purity was reviled and innocence was taunted and found guilty and held up for derision and death, it was supremely so with Him! But as He hung there, with a guilty malefactor on either side and with the mob about Him shouting itself hoarse in derision and maledictions, He uttered wistfully the most gracious words He could summon: "Father, *forgive* them; *for they know not what they do.*" (Luke 23:34)

And their answer? Read it there yourself, ere His pain-parched lips had had time to come to rest! Look: "And they parted his raiment, and *cast lots.*" Was there ever a more callous and cynical answer to utter love? Gambling for the garments of the One who still wished to swing open the gates of everlasting life to them!

But He was consistent with His own preaching! What had He said on this very point? Listen: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matthew 6:14, 15) He lived up to His own exacting words! And so should we!

But the point is that this great forgiveness came because of His great love! A lesser love could not have offered so vast a gift, at such staggering cost.

Recently I heard a minister tell about a man in our armed services who had been captured and tortured by the Japanese in World War II. This man in his agony accepted Christ as his Saviour and dedicated his life to the Christian ministry. He returned to this country, took his training for the ministry under the GI Bill and returned to Japan as a Christian missionary. Not long ago he sat on the same platform with a high Japanese official who had had charge of the sneak attack upon Pearl Harbor. For that Japanese officer had become a Christian too and the American who had suffered so terribly now found it possible to forgive him and his fellows. Indeed it is true that "We pardon *in the degree that we love.*" Haven't you found it so? Said Henry Ward Beecher: "God pardons like a mother, who kisses the offense into everlasting forgetfulness."

How did Peter ask Jesus about forgiveness, and what did Jesus tell him? (Matthew 18:21, 22) Wouldn't you say that this was exacting a very large measure of love, to forgive so frequently and *with so little response*, apparently?

How should a knowledge of our own frailties help us to forgive others? (Galatians 6:1) *Why?*

Let's forgive more!

The Power of the Resurrection

TOPIC TALK FOR MARCH 25-31

BY ROBERT CASPAR LINTNER

Paul, who wrote so many wonderful words of challenge and power, used these words as part of a powerful expression of his great faith in the Risen Christ: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means *I* might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

The power of His resurrection!

And what power it was! And is!

For it is still with us, demanding that we reckon with it and conform to it, until, like Paul, we might hope to attain to it ourselves!

And so we ought!

For what Christian can ignore that power? And who of us is not wistful when we think how we need that power in our lives and in our frightened, factioned world?

Let's consider this power of His resurrection, for it can tell us much and it can do much for us if we will let it!

For the power of the resurrection is the illimitable power of the Risen Christ, thrusting aside the hard stone with its seal shouting blatant words about Roman might that was shoved aside and condemned by the hands with the nail-wounds. His power not only defied Rome, it defied a harder master that trembling men have called Death. The sandaled feet of the Risen Lord walked over both of them in the first wisps of the Judean dawn. And the singing birds grew silent in awe.

POWER was afoot, striding out of Joseph's lent tomb to meet a new day—and to master a new world!

Do you remember what He said about this power and how we may come into a portion of it ourselves? "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John 11:25, 26)

What was the sharp question that Paul put to Agrippa about the truth of the resurrection? "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8) Was not the creation of the universe a greater wonder?

But doesn't the power of His resurrection shine out of the life of many a man whom He has rescued from the living death of a sin-cursed life? Don't you remember it in the story of the Prodigal Son—the fellow who was dead in sin and yet found his way back to life in the Father's house? (Luke 15: 11-32) How do we come now into this "newness of life," as Paul called it? (Romans 6:4) Remember again these other words: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) That is the power of the resurrection, made available for you—*now!* Have you opened your life to it as He invites you to open it?

This newness of life is for you!

Over the Channel

BY CHARLES E. WADE

THE Piper L-59A responded to its controls beautifully as I nosed it up from the airfield in France. We were flying to London with a large Manila envelope for Lt. Carlton. I had been pestering the skipper for a pass to England, and he told me to take forty-eight hours off after the envelope was delivered. It was tucked behind me, and I chuckled as I envisioned the surprised faces of certain German officials when our bombers laid their eggs upon some important "secret" installations in Germany.

I said "we." The other occupant of the grasshopper was Walter Findon, a sandy-haired lad of about twenty-two. He had been in the ground crew but pleaded that he wanted to fly. The skipper gave in and Findon was being trained as an observer. He sat in the observer's seat, back to back with mine. He wouldn't have much to do on this trip, as I knew the run by heart; he had the radio back there and could take care of that end of the job.

Reaching 8,000 feet, I levelled off and settled back for the voyage over the Channel. The little Piper was flying nicely so I had time to muse. Forty-

eight hours! I would go to Birmingham and visit that dark-haired girl I had been corresponding with. We met on an omnibus in Birmingham, I took her out several times, and that started our friendship.

Walter had been on the bus too and I suddenly remembered that he was in back of me. "Hey, Walter!" I shouted over my shoulder. "Remember Maisie Ward of Birmingham? I'm going to call on her when we get off this grasshopper."

There was no response, only what sounded like a grunt. Shrugging

my shoulders, I watched the shimmering water of the Channel, far below. I was rudely interrupted in my reflections by two arms grasping my shoulders and a voice growling in my ear, "Get out of that seat!"

Trying to brush him off, I remonstrated, "Walter, this isn't the time or place for horseplay. Get back to your radio!"

He did not reply, but unhooked my safety belt and attempted to yank me up from my seat. I struggled to break loose and the plane lurched; my head banged against something and I blacked out.



I struggled to break loose and the plane lurched; my head banged against something and I blacked out.

When I opened my eyes, I was in the observer's seat and my head ached like the dickens. Cautiously peering around, I discovered Walter in my place, piloting the Piper. He seemed to know what to do, but was a bit awkward, and the ship acted like a skittish horse.

Why had he attacked me? I had just mentioned Maisie a few moments earlier—could he be jealous? Then I recalled the maps in that Manila envelope—perhaps he was a spy. Looking out, I noted that we were nearing the other side of the Channel, but had lost our altitude. Evidently he was taking the plane to England, and I could take care of him when we landed. My head ached and I closed my eyes for a while.

Rousing myself, I noted that we were nearing the airport and someone had to take care of the radio. The earphones hurt but I donned them and called the landing tower.

"We see you. Circle the field until we give you the clear," the operator replied to my call.

I didn't know whether Walter would pay any attention or not, but I relayed the order to him without turning around. I felt safer now, as there were plenty of planes in the air around us.

The voice from the control tower boomed up in my ears, "All right, Piper, come in. Say, who the hell is piloting that grasshopper? He needs a refresher course."

I gave Walter the first part of the message but refrained from irritating him with the remark about his flying.

He cut the motor, made a steep bank. "Here we go!" I murmured, closing my eyes and waiting for the crash. Somehow he pulled out, and I opened my eyes to find the Piper bumping up and

down on the landing strip like a real grasshopper.

Walter turned his head and, from the corner of my eye, I noted the gloomy expression upon his countenance, "I knew that I could do it!" he exclaimed. Then, solicitously, "I hope you weren't hurt much. You see, I always wanted to be a pilot but they told me that I was too nervous to fly." He bowed his head and moistened his lips with his tongue. "After you make your report about what I did, I suppose they'll transfer me to the Infantry or worse."

"Wait and see," I chuckled. Picking up the envelope, I hopped out of the Piper. There were several men gathered about the plane and I recognized Lt. Carlton among them. Saluting, I presented him with the envelope.

"You look kind of dragged out, Sergeant," he observed; then added, "Is that why you flew in like a recruit?"

I could feel Walter's eyes anxiously staring as he nervously awaited my reply. "You see, sir," I glibly lied, "we hit an air pocket and I smacked my head." Then I turned and pointed to Walter, who had his mouth agape and a bewildered expression on his face. "Lieutenant, this man put me in the observer's seat and flew the Piper in. He is rated as an observer, but he should be recommended for pilot training. He saved us from cracking up."

Lt. Carlton reached out and shook Walter's hand, congratulating him and promising to put in a good word on his behalf. Walter blushed and stammered his appreciation.

When we were safely out of earshot, Walter put his arm on my shoulder and grasped my hand in a firm grip. He expressed a world of gratitude with one word filled with feeling, "Thanks!"

Hand It to the Handicapped

BY MARY O'CONNOR

PROBABLY no group of people has had a better opportunity than the handicapped to weigh the things that count in life. For their very happiness depends entirely upon the way they adjust themselves to whatever fate has dealt out to them.

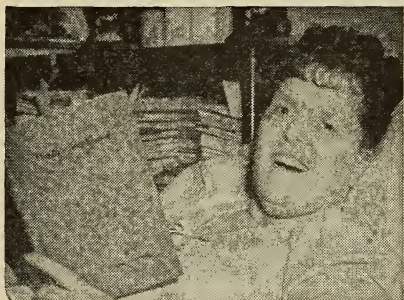
No one is immune to the accidents of life, the vicissitudes that are part of living. No one wants to be a hot-house flower who never takes any chances and never moves from the front doorstep. And no one knows who will be spared or who will have to rally all his courage to cope with an unfortunate situation. No one chooses to be an invalid.

The disabled person must search his most secret depths for his or her own personal victory over catastrophe. He must call up all the patience he ever heard of. Perhaps this is the whole key.

As soon as life seems a certainty, despite the handicap, a definite view or philosophy evolves . . . sometimes slowly . . . developing from a very little bud at the start . . . but coming into full bloom, depending upon the character of the individual. Often, the greater the disability, the stronger becomes the determination to conquer it.

There are dozens of gadgets for the disabled. Most of them were invented by those who needed them most. Arthritics with terribly shapeless hands are often seen knitting or crocheting beautiful baby sacques and bonnets. Those who are paralyzed in the lower limbs may write extensively—for publication, or letters to cheer less for-

tunate friends. It is a matter of pride with a shut-in. If he can do something himself, without calling a nurse, it is good for him. He has conquered another turn in the road. It is amazing to see paralyzed folk reaching a pair of thirty-inch shears out toward a ball of yarn on a table, or an apple. If a piece of paper drops on the floor it is not too



Mary O'Connor with her volume, *THE SOARING FLAME*.

difficult to get it with a stick that has Scotch tape on its end, sticky side out. Or the shade may be pulled down with a stick having a hook on its end.

Hardly anything is impossible. Shut-ins are proving this over and over again. If there is sufficient faith behind the handicap one may live usefully and with a great deal of happiness for years and years. And when outsiders keep reminding a handicapped person, just by the pitying expression of the eyes, *that* is the worst thing they can do. A handicapped person wants to *live* ABOVE his handicap, to

think BEYOND it. Yet he does understand the emotions back of that pitying expression and tries to put the walk-about at ease. Perhaps that is one of the little gracious acts of most shut-ins. They do try to make their friends treat them like normal people, rather than shut-ins.

Whether veterans of war, or peacetime victims, most shut-ins have courage—that priceless quality that still holds up its chin after a hundred blows have already landed on it. No one can draw a picture of courage. It is a quality of hope in the strongest degree, a hope for joys to come, regardless of one's position. Perhaps it is a mixture of that almighty pride plus a measure of faith.

Shut-ins have had plenty of time

to think, to sort, and to rearrange their own philosophies of life. They may have created brand new lives for themselves. And it has been proved over and over again that just taking care of an invalid may show up added patience in the nurse and family.

Walkabouts are slowly becoming educated to the fact that physical weakness or disability does not mean mental inferiority. Just because one is paralyzed from the neck . . . down, it does not follow that he is paralyzed from the neck . . . up. If you need an understanding friend to listen to your troubles (and who doesn't?), seek out one who is disabled. A shut-in will cheer you every time. Hand it to the handicapped!

THE PEACETIME K-9 CORPS

(Continued from page 9)

for the trainer to sink to the ground beside the dog and attempt to locate what the dog senses. Once the prowler has been found, the sentry cautions the dog to remain quiet and they both crawl to a point where the stranger can be challenged. The trainer has the dog on a leash during the preliminary period of patrolling, but when a stranger is located, the dog is taken off the leash and given the command to "guard him." This is the signal for the dog to watch the prowler, and at the command "Attack!" the dog hurls himself through the air with enough force to drive the average man to the ground.

The dogs are trained to disarm a man with a gun, and the presence of a weapon or actual firing at the animal won't stop the charging beast. The rushing dog is swift and deadly, and unless the trainer intervenes, the prow-

ler's throat may be torn out by the savage aggressiveness of the dog.

When assigned to a restricted area, the dog patrols throughout the territory by himself and will allow no one but his handler to approach the fence. By barking and growling, the dog not only frightens any intruder, but also alerts the human sentries who are near by.

These silent and effective canine sentries work every night of the year, and some of the veterans of the Corps have worked for two years without a night off duty.

Although they are unheralded in their work, and they don't receive the publicity other branches of the service get, these courageous four-footed soldiers are playing a small, but vitally important, role in the Nation's peacetime defense establishment.

Buddy, It's Cold Outside

BY M/SGT. HERBERT E. SMITH, USA (INF), RET.

AS they put it in Brooklyn, I shoulda stood in bed. In my good G. I. cot. In barracks. In active service, that is.

Instead, I took retirement some months ago, on the completion of a little more than 27 years' service in this man's army. Me—I got a hole in my fool head!

Brother, take a tip from this lonely, poorer-and-wiser old sarge: stay in! Pull your full thirty years of active service.

I picked up my retirement papers and prepared to take it easy, to lead the life of Riley complete with one (1) spouse and a 57-varieties breed of mongrel dog that had attached himself to me for rations, quarters, and canine administration.

Then the roof fell in.

Item: A drastic cut in income. The Uncle takes care of his own. The retirement check is adequate; it'll keep a roof over your head and rations in the refrigerator. But it's a deep cut, all the same, from the full pay you pick up at the pay table while you're "in." There's the matter of clothes, for instance. You can't wear those beat-up old tan slacks and that dyed cotton shirt long. And anybody who tries to tell you civilian duds are cheap, these days, is strictly a refugee from the nut ward. Chow? Modestly priced in the big supermarkets, you say? Brother, give ear to my favorite mess sarge—the Missus. *She'll* tell you how much we miss the commissary meat market and vegetable stalls!



Item: Medical and dental care. The retired man, himself, is assured of this. To play safe, though, he'd better settle down not too far from a service hospital. And his wife, usually every bit as

good an "old soldier" as he, is out in the cold if the family vine- (and mortgage-) covered cottage is far removed from a hospital of that branch of the armed forces from which her husband retired. Specifically, take a typical case history. My own. I've holed up in a city in southernmost Southern California. It's a Navy port, a bustling base for a flock of vessels and men of the seagoing service. There's a big, handsomely equipped, and excellently staffed U. S. naval hospital here. I'm eligible for admittance thereto, and any necessary treatment. Not so my wife, my dependent. Unification doesn't extend to the dependents of retired personnel. If anything happens to my wife she'll have to be moved some 500 miles upstate, to the nearest Army hospital—Letterman General, at the Presidio of San Francisco.

Item: Recreation and comradeship. In my book, most important categories. Take the seemingly minor matter of movies. I'm a cinema addict, as is Friend Wife. We like everything Hollywood has to offer—Bugs Bunny to Bette Davis. In active service, on a post or on CRQ status nearby, I rarely missed the post movie show—catching the latest features for around two bits' entry fee. Gone are the days! To-

day, Friend Wife and I hit the block-long lines at the local movie houses, and get up our respective 99 cents to see the pictures you folks in active service saw at your post movie weeks ago.

Sports? We have a pretty fair ball club here, presently well up in the first division of the Pacific Coast League. But you can have it, brother—and all other pro baseball, football, and hockey squads. Give me the spirited rivalry of those old service games, with B Battery taking on C Company in a dingdong battle on the diamond or gridiron, complete with the sound effects from the band and the highly partisan mob in the bleachers.

More than all else, the retired man misses the comradeship of service life. "There's something about a soldier,"

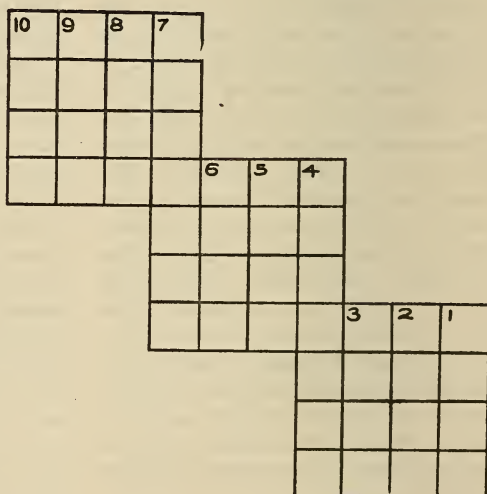
as the popular song of yesteryear had it. You bet! There's something about the closely knit companionship, the *esprit de corps*, of post life that one rarely if ever finds on the outside. I've been lucky in that I've succeeded in making some good contacts with my civilian neighbors and fellow townsmen. My wife's doing all right, too, with her ladies of the North Park Canasta, Bridge and Euchre Club and Literary and Debating Society. But, frankly, there's something lacking. Swell as these people are, they just don't speak our language.

All in all, buddy, take our word for it. Retirement can't begin to compare with active service. *Stay in*, soldier! It's darned cold outside!

A STAIRSTEP PUZZLE

By Virginia B. Weddle

Start with Step 1 and, working straight down for each number, see if you can climb the stairs. Use the definitions below to help you. (Hint: it works two ways.) Solution on page 48.



1. A variety of cabbage
2. A prison room
3. A plan
4. A secret device to aid in performing a trick
5. A son of Caleb (I Chron. 4:15)
6. A brave man of David's army (I Chron. 11:29)
7. Apparent
8. One time
9. Not one
10. A son of Seth (Gen. 4:26)

LINK LINES

By the Editor

There Is a Brook

On a farm I know, there is a brook. It was there centuries before pioneers built the old stone house, some 150 years ago. Successive generations have dwelt in the old house near the brook that was and is. Many born to its music lived some few decades and died within hearing of its ceaseless song.

By the little brook Indians bent their bows. To it the timid deer come to drink. Not long ago I flushed two flocks of ducks feeding in its waters. I like to wander along its banks. They are filled to overflowing after a heavy rain. Then it sings loudly a merry song. After a long drouth its song is no more than a whisper, but it keeps on flowing and I love it then.

In a day of change and uncertainty it is good to come upon something that seems to live forever. The mountains do, but you expect that of great masses of rock. They stand in mighty majesty, while a little brook goes places and does things.

The wonder of its permanence is magnified by the fact that it is such a little thing, and that come flood or

drouth it is ever adequate. It is alluring because it is so busy and so alive. Sometimes I think the little brook I know is a bit like truth. You may accept it, you may ignore it, but it is indestructible. On a hot day with its abundance of crystal-clear cold water it reminds me of the goodness of God, and of His love that never faileth.

Though the world be gripped by fear and wrapped in a fog of cold uncertainty, still can I hie me down to the brook I know and be again assured there is a God who has a plan that includes all the yesterdays and all the tomorrows and all of His children.

The Urge to Boast

Now on a certain day, as a light bulb glowed in a subterranean passage it began to think of itself, and grew so proud it started to speak, and this it said: "How brave am I! Here in this lonely cavern I chase the shadows into the far corners and they dare not come near me. How beautiful am I! Gloriously do I sparkle and shine. How generous am I! For do I not light the path for all who come this way? How strong am I! Behold, I glow for countless hours and I tire not. In this dank corridor of brick and stone, only I do live and wondrous works I do for I am great."

Just then there sounded down the corridor the click of a switch and the boasting bulb was dead.

The Pine

BY M. LOVINA COOPER



Then he asked, without preface, "Are you going to marry Hardwicke?"

'LONESOME PINE' some call me; others, 'Old Giant,' but there are a few who think of me as 'Storm Pine,' remembering the lightning that split my trunk, ripping it the entire length. It is about the storm that I want to tell you—but that was the end of the story.

The beginning was back twenty years, when the Boy and the Girl came to play up here at the top of the hill. They romped around me, later cut hearts and initials in my bark, and still later came here to say their good-byes; that was when war sent the Boy overseas. The Girl followed soon after. They did not meet again until the war was over, and they had come home. It was here in my shade they had their first reunion.

There had been Hardwicke, but Hardwicke had not gone to war; his hearing, they said. It cleared up shortly after the draft. Now that the Girl was back, he was asking her again to marry him. He had wanted her a long time; he was used to getting what he wanted. This time he had to wait once more; the Boy, as usual, stood between. But the Boy had never asked her.

"It's wonderful, being with you again," the Boy said, as they reached the top of the hill, and stood beside me.

"It's been a long time—Major!" she smiled up at him.

"A long time, Lieutenant!" he grinned down at her.

I whispered while they talked. Perhaps I sighed. Have you heard the whisper—or the sigh—of a Pine? I told him to take her in his arms, but he didn't do it. I knew why, the next time they came. He wanted money, he told her, and to make a name for himself; he was leaving for the West.

"Are you ever coming back?"

"Sometime, perhaps, when I'm more than just another lawyer. Getting top billing is rugged business. I'll be starting again from scratch."

"You'll make the grade," she said, softly.

Then he asked, without preface, "Are you going to marry Hardwicke?"

She did not answer at once, so he went on, "He has what it takes, you know."

"I didn't know," she replied. "What does your legal mind say it takes?"

"Money, and position. What they bring, you deserve. If you never knew before, the war showed what poverty can do to women."

"I saw how women can take it," she countered.

He appeared not to notice. "Don't let it touch you!" he said, evenly.

I shook my branches, but they gave no heed. This was good-bye again, and there was nothing I could do about it.

They did not return together that year, nor the next. The Girl came alone once in a while. I whispered to her, but she did not understand. Her eyes were on the hills, and beyond—and once there were tears.

The third summer they came together up the path. Hardwicke was with them. I waved a cheery welcome.

Hardwicke was speaking. "Good to have you back, old man," he was saying. His voice was too smooth, his words slopped over. "Let's see—how long has it been?"

"Long enough for you to get married," was the rejoinder.

Hardwicke went on with his nice talk. "This company of ours is okay; young, but a husky baby. I thought you might like to come in with us. We could use a good lawyer like you," and he smiled at his wife.

Without smiling, she looked at the Boy. He was no longer the Boy—he was now the Man—the Lawyer; and she was the Woman—another man's wife.

They came occasionally that summer, these three, to eat picnic suppers—to talk business.

Followed then the financial maelstrom. Hardwicke, along with the many others, was sucked into the whirlpool. Suddenly he was ruined, broken, bewildered, bitter. It was here, beside me, while they waited for the Man to join them that the Woman and Hardwicke talked it over.

"Bitterness does no good," she had said to Hardwicke when he raged at losing all. "It isn't the way to take it."

"Take it! I don't have to take it!" he had yelled back.

She had tried to soothe him. "Beginning again will be slow, but we are young, and we can do it."

"I'm no beginner," he countered, "but I can end it fast!"

"How?"

"Pull a trigger."

She stared at him. "Don't be silly!" she said, then went on, quietly, "We planned to eat supper here under the Pine, the three of us. Let's act as if we had the world by the tail." She knew he was not the kind to take his own life. "I baked some nice fresh cookies this morning," she continued, "the brownies you like. I'll get the food out of the hamper."

I stood motionless as the Man came up the hill. No breeze was stirring. Silence hung heavy; it was everywhere; anything could happen on a night like this.

They greeted each other, sat down, talked a little, watching the dark clouds—getting darker.

Visibly oppressed, Hardwicke sud-

denly got to his feet. He began to talk.

"This is no help, this gob of gloom," he exploded. "A dirty blow hits me," he grumbled, "gets me down, and I'm supposed to get up and come back for more. I'm allergic to punishment. Showing the world you can 'take it' isn't my idea of entertainment. When you're through, you're through, and I believe in a quick exit—quick, and easy, that's my way. Pfft, like that, and you're out—and at the end of the page someone writes 'insurance'!" He bowed low to his wife.

"Don't talk that way!" she begged.

He turned then to the other man. "What say you, my learned friend? Thinkst thou not such exit a kind and noble gesture?"

"You want my opinion?" asked the Man, coldly.

"Assuredly! Your momentous opinion!"

"All right, Hardwicke. Fear has hit you harder than misfortune. You can overcome both—that is, if you have the guts."

"Stop right there!" broke in Hardwicke. "I should have known you couldn't hold back such righteous superiority. For your information, I don't care a hang what you think! I've always played it smart, and I don't care who knows it. Like my hearing, when I was drafted; I had a smart doctor. You, knowing so much, probably knew that too. It's clever dodging that makes living easier. That's how I rode the wave, while you and your kind beat yourselves out. If you think I'm accepting the heroic role now, I've got news for you—I prefer being what you, doubtless, would like to call a 'quitter.' Not a big part, usually, but I'll make it dramatic. I was always strong for dramatics. They intrigue me. I regret

I shall not be around for the applause!"

"Would fifty thousand dollars stop you?" asked the Lawyer.

Hardwicke stood rigid, looking at him. "What sort of gag is that?"

"No gag. I thought you might consider it an easy way out."

"Where would one find that kind of money now?"

I began to shake my branches. The storm was coming nearer.

"Oh, there's still money," was the quiet reply. "First, I had put some aside, where it was safe. Item two, I recently came into an inheritance that I may have failed to mention. Item three, I know where I can probably borrow more."

The Woman was softly crying. I whispered to her, but she did not hear.

Hardwicke was silent, staring into space, leaning against me for support. His face was drawn with emotion, hope fighting for supremacy.

"We'd better go," said the Lawyer. "The storm is very near."

He and the Woman started slowly, silently, down the path. They turned to call Hardwicke.

At that moment it came—the lightning that shot from the heavens, the bolt that rent my trunk from head to foot.

Hardwicke lay dead beside me.

The Man and the Woman stood paralyzed on the path. He had thrown his arms around her, and she was clinging to him, neither seemingly aware of the other, both aware only of Hardwicke.

Rain began to fall, night was settling down. This was the end—and this was the beginning!

I stood motionless in the gathering darkness. I had played my part in the drama. Now I could wait—wait for the morning, and the healing of the sun.

A
BIBLE READING
FOR
EVERY DAY
OF THE MONTH

Daily Rations



BY
JAMES V. CLAYPOOL
(Secy., promotion of
Bible Use,
American Bible
Society)

FEBRUARY

MARCH

THEME: "Consecrated, Lord, to Thee"

THEME: The Greatest Life in the World

1. Prayer for God's House
.....I Chronicles 29:1-20
2. Consecrated to God Luke 2:21-40
3. In Good Company Luke 2:41-52
4. A Wise Heart I Kings 3:1-15
5. Smart Judgment I Kings 3:16-28
6. Obstinate Obstructionists
.....Isaiah 1:11-31
7. Young Man Jesus Luke 4:1-32
8. Sunday Troubles Luke 6:1-19
9. Undivided Allegiance ...Luke 7:1-18
10. Always Criticizing Luke 7:19-35
11. Jesus in Society Luke 7:36-50
12. David's Last Song ...II Samuel 23:1-17
13. Battling with Bulls ...I Kings 18:1-24
14. The Rains Came I Kings 18:25-46
15. True Liberty II Corinthians 3
16. Daily Renewal II Corinthians 4
17. Together with God ...II Corinthians 5
18. Strong to Save Luke 8:22-39
19. Helping a Little Girl ...Luke 8:40-56
20. Returning with Joy Luke 10:1-24
21. The Good Samaritan ...Luke 10:25-42
22. Sound Advice I Peter 5
23. For Bible Reading II Peter 1
24. Jesus' Last Words Matthew 28
25. Answers to Prayer Luke 11:5-13
26. Lamp-light Luke 11:14-36
27. Possessed by Things Luke 12:1-30
28. True Treasure Luke 12:31-59

1. Kill or Cure? Luke 13:1-17
2. First or Last? Luke 13:18-35
3. How to Entertain Luke 14:1-24
4. Ready to Fight Luke 14:25-35
5. Finding the Lost Luke 15:1-10
6. One or the Other Luke 16:1-18
7. A Gulf in Heaven Luke 16:19-31
8. Self-Righteous Luke 18:1-14
9. What Did You Do? Luke 19:1-27
10. The Suffering Servant Isaiah 53
11. National Wickedness Isaiah 59
12. A New Earth Isaiah 65:11-25
13. Lift the Gates Psalms 24
14. The Source of Courage Psalms 27
15. The Judgment of God Psalms 50
16. Relief from Sin Psalms 51
17. The Triumphal Entry ...Luke 19:28-48
18. Heckling Jesus Luke 20:1-18
19. Caesar and God Luke 20:19-47
20. Watching and Waiting Luke 21
21. The Last Night Together Luke 22:1-38
22. Betraying Jesus Luke 22:39-71
23. Sentenced to Die Luke 23:1-25
24. On the Cross Luke 23:26-56
25. Alive and Gone Luke 24:1-12
26. Comrades of the Way ...Luke 24:13-35
27. The Unknown Guest ..Luke 24:36-53
28. Jesus Supreme Hebrews 2
29. Perfect Through Suffering Hebrews 5
30. Mutual Support I Thessalonians 4
31. Sensible Suggestions ..I Thessalonians 5

The Last of the Bar None

BY HAROLD HELFER

I CAN'T help but wonder how somebody else, if he had been sheriff instead of me, would have handled the matter.

Of course, to begin at the beginning, the new preacher, Rev. Peter Blake, didn't have to pass by the Bar None tavern on his way to church. But he did, and almost invariably he would step inside and begin to preach against the evils of the saloon and how it ought to be done away with.

There were some, cynics, who said that maybe it wasn't only the opportunity to preach against sin in its own bailiwick that attracted Preacher Blake to the tavern. The young proprietress, Mary Mullins, was an uncommonly pretty redhead. The young minister was tall and straight, with curly dark hair, and the fire and brimstone he breathed hadn't melted him down. Anyway he kept coming.

Of course, there was no doubt that the preacher had a point to make when he took out after the tavern. It did get out of hand every now and then, especially on Saturday nights when the miners and ranch hands came with their pay to make a holiday, which sometimes meant shooting up the fixtures, if not one another. That's how Mary Mullins' pa, Mike, who started the Bar None, got it in the chest with a .45. He was trying to break up a shooting match between two of his customers.

Naturally, when Mike went, the tavern reverted to his only child and relative, Mary, but there were some who, knowing Mary and liking her, had hoped she would sell out and not have anything to do with the tavern. But

Mary had a stubborn Irish streak in her. The Bar None had been her father's life work and she intended to keep it going. She figured Mike might have wanted it that way.

The boys were all for riding the Reverend Peter Blake out of town on a rail when he first poked his head in the Bar None and began preaching against it. Their attitude was that they worked hard for their money and they had a right to spend it as they saw fit and the preacher had a church to preach in and had no call to come bursting in on people somewhere else. Some of the boys felt so keenly about this that one time they actually had their hands on the preacher, when Mary called out, "Let him be. A person's got a right to talk about whatever he wants to talk about in this country. Just like we got the right not to pay any attention to what he says if we don't want to."

And, to show her determination not to let the preacher get the best of her, she punctuated her statement by ringing up a sale on the register. The boys laughed and let the preacher go.

From then on hardly a week went by but what the Reverend Mr. Blake stepped inside the tavern and spoke out with all his fervor against it. He called it a "spawning ground of shame and wickedness," and sometimes, looking directly at Mary, he pleaded with her to close the place so that "instead of carousing and throwing their time and money away the men of this community would follow nobler pursuits." But it wasn't until Billy Makin, who was only 17, was shot in the Bar None that the

tall young preacher called upon heaven "to visit ruin on this infamous place of iniquity."

"I am going to pray for the destruction of this ungodly establishment," he cried out in the tavern the night after Billy Makin was shot. "I am calling upon the Lord to show His displeasure tomorrow on His day, the Sabbath, and

that you are underneath a fine person and wish things were otherwise but have too much pride to publicly acknowledge this."

And their eyes met, Mary's and the young preacher's, and lingered—but when the bartender handed her the toast she took it and drank it down.

All the next day, Sunday, Rev. Peter



I saw someone fooling around by the Bar None just before the fire broke out.

remove this structure from the face of the earth."

This brought a round of laughter from the boys in the tavern and one or two were all for having an even bigger laugh by pitching the preacher out on his ear, but Mary shook her head. "Let's drink a toast to our doom—on the house," said Mary, and this was greeted by appreciative cheers and roars.

"May the Lord have mercy on your soul, Mary Mullins," the young preacher cried out fervently, "for you are young and know not what you do. I have the feeling and always have had,

Blake stood in his church praying for the destruction of the tavern. It was a nice, sunny day—a little warm maybe, but as calm, weather-speaking, as you could want a day to be. If the Lord was riled, there seemed to be no evidence of it. And the men who liked to hang out in the Bar None purposely walked in front of the church and laughed and talked louder than was necessary. Still, the weather continued calm and undisturbed for the rest of the day. But in the evening clouds began to form, thick and black, and suddenly there came thunder and lightning and an unnatural amount of hail.

This kept up for quite some time—longer than most thunderstorms. And then, after a flash of lightning that came bursting out of the sky like an angry pitchfork and a burst of thunder that seemed to rock the town, fire broke out at the Bar None. Before anybody could even try to do anything it was a mass of flames and quickly burned to the ground.

It was late at night when it happened. Although the tavern had been closed for nearly an hour, a mob of miners and ranch hands promptly gathered. There was an unmistakable smell of kerosene about the ruins of the tavern. A sneaking suspicion that quickly became a conviction took hold of the mob. Instead of being God-induced the fire was man-made.

Quickly the house of the most logical suspect—the Reverend Peter Blake—was surrounded. I got there just in time. They had a noose around his neck and were marching him across the field.

"Hey, fellows," I called out, "you

know better than to try to pull anything like this. Besides, you got the wrong person."

This last stopped them. "There seemed to be quite a bit of tension in town today, what with there even being a mob some of the time in front of the church," I went on, "so I decided it would be best if I did some patrol work tonight. Well, as I did I saw someone fooling around by the Bar None just before the fire broke out. I never got too close to the person—who broke and ran, but I know it wasn't the preacher. The person who started the fire was smaller than the preacher and in dungarees."

A murmuring swept through the mob and someone spoke up, "Well, we all know the sheriff is a square shooter. He might try to stop us from lynching the preacher, but he wouldn't lie to do it."

It was the truth that I had spoken, and I guess they could tell it. They let the preacher go.

Now all that happened some months ago but, like I said, I can't help but wonder if someone else would have handled the matter differently and made an arrest. After all, arson is arson. But I figure, on the other hand, the town is a much better place for it. The preacher's prediction coming true, along with the strange and mysterious figure in dungarees no one could place, had a sobering effect on everybody. Of course, people would have had a lot better idea concerning the identity if, in my description, I had gone on to say that this somebody had red hair and that the dungarees had the shape only a woman can give them. But was it really anybody's business, since it was her own place she had burned down to make the preacher's prediction come true? And, besides, I'd feel funny as the dickens arresting the preacher's wife.



"Ain't necessary for instructions if he's liable to sea-sickness—he'll do it."



Teacher: "Who can tell me what the former ruler of Russia was called?"

Class (in unison): "Czar."

Teacher: "Correct. And what was his wife called?"

Class: "Czarina."

Teacher: "Correct. And what were the Czar's children called?"

A pause and then a timid voice piped up: "Czardines."

—*Christian Union Herald*

"Young feller, yore shore brave to come down in a parachute in an awful cyclone like this."

"I didn't come down in a parachute. I went up in a tent."

—*Watchman-Examiner*

A G.I. asking for a loan was asked what his business was and gave the startling answer that he was a psychiatrist in a pottery factory. Further questioning drew out the information that he took care of the cracked pots.

—*Christian Observer*

They used to take the fender off

And hammer out the dents,

Then put it on the car again

At just a slight expense.

But now the fender's streamlined in

And really meant to stay,

So you must either keep the dents

Or throw the car away!

—*Exchange*

An invitation to dinner had been sent to the newly settled physician. In reply, the hostess received an absolutely illegible letter.

"I must know if he accepts or refuses," she declared.

"If I were you," suggested her husband, "I would take it to a druggist. Druggists can always read doctors' letters, however badly they are written."

The druggist looked at the slip of note paper, went into his dispensary and returned a few minutes later with a bottle. "Here you are, Madam," he said. "It will be seventy-five cents."

—*The Benefit News*

The Sunday school teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt. "My mother looked back once while she was driving," said little Jimmy triumphantly, "and she turned into a telephone pole!"

—*Boston Naval Shipyard News*

Teacher: "If your mother gave you a large apple and a small one and told you to divide with your brother, which would you give him?"

Johnnie: "Do you mean my little brother or my big brother?"

—*California Retail Grocers Advocate*



Curious Affair

BY L. J. HUBER

IT seems funny that certain things can happen only to me. It wouldn't be so bad if I didn't make a devout practice of trying to mind my own business. I had to turn into that channel because my red hair and freckles always seemed to be leading me into trouble. At least I blamed it on that. It could very well have been the fact that my name is Bridget, that I'm Irish and that I am just naturally curious.

So, as I say, I steered my ski-shaped nose away from other people's business. This should have been the answer to all my troubles. It wasn't. The more I tried keeping out of other houses the more they kept coming to mine. After due consideration I'm not at all surprised at what happened to me the other day.

I had gone downtown to do a little shopping. Before doing the buying I went into the ritual that is every woman's right—window shopping. This is what I shouldn't have done. But my upturned nose is so convenient. It permits me to get much closer to windows than someone with a common proboscis. This could also be the reason why I get closer to other folks' affairs.

I was standing in front of Gracey's admiring the mink coats that someone else was going to buy. A man moved toward me from the right. He acted like he was also window shopping. A second man was moving in from the left. I stood between them.

"Take this," the man said. "And don't open it."

I took a good look at him. He was

a handsome man but beneath his suave appearance there was something sinister and swarthy. Before I knew what had happened he pressed a small box in my hand. I was too amazed to scream. He turned and walked away from me as fast as his long legs would carry him without breaking into a run. I watched with my mouth open like a freight elevator.

The object in my hand was small and black. It wasn't very heavy. The top was sealed with a heavy red wax. I shook it. It was then that the man on the other side made his presence known.

"Are you curious?" he asked. Before I had a chance to answer he talked again. "Don't open that package," he said. "Take it with you and hold it until someone calls for it. Understand?"

I was going to say that I didn't understand but he turned and mingled with the crowd from an incoming bus. I eyed the nearest rubbish can and counted to ten. If I had done what I was going to do without counting, I would have disposed of the object right there. When I got to eight I knew I was going to hold that package. The first man was back.

"Move on," he said. "Don't stand there all day with that box."

He went in the same direction as the second man. I moved the other way, hoping to lose them. Before I got to the end of the block I knew what was happening. I had lost them. A girl in a red coat was following me. I crossed the street. She crossed right

behind me. I re-crossed it and so did she. I went into a store and she was there with me. She made no effort to conceal the fact that she was with me without my consent. She was just my size.

"What's the game, sister?" I said.

"I beg your pardon?"

"This game we're playing. What's the score?"

"I don't understand what you mean," she said.

With that she turned and walked away from me. I watched until she got out of sight and then I hurried in the other direction. I was just going out the door of the store when I saw the second man fall into step behind me.

He was walking and watching. Which would have been all right if he hadn't been watching *me*. The package, which I had put in my handbag, was getting very heavy.

Officer Madden waved at me and I waved back to him. This was my chance to get rid of it. I started walking toward him and the man cut between us. He eyed me sharply. It was like a challenge. I accepted it and kept the package after telling Madden that he looked particularly handsome this morning.

Right then and there I knew that I could never shake these people. I took the package out of my bag and gave it a close examination. I smelled it. I



Before I knew what had happened he pressed a small box in my hand. I was too amazed to scream

listened for a rattle. Nothing happened.

There was nothing to do but go home, so I boarded a bus. No one followed me. Success at last. Two stops later the girl with the red coat got aboard. She ignored me as she passed my seat. Then she sat behind me and I could feel her eyes on me. Like cold grapes being put down the back of my neck.

When I got off the bus I knew she would follow. She did. I walked down the street where we live. She was only a few paces behind me. A car was moving down the other side. Without looking I knew it would be the two men. It was.

The girl was starting to catch up with me. She was at my side and I stifled a cry for help. I was going to see this through. The men in the car pulled over. The package was really heavy now.

"You live near here?" the girl asked.

"Yes," I said.

"We thought so. Stop in front of your house."

I did as I was told. The girl was very poker-faced. The men got out of their car. To me they still appeared vicious and swarthy. The three of them surrounded me.

"I'll give you twenty dollars for that package," the girl said.

This stopped everything, including my small ability to think. They had just given it to me and now they wanted to buy it back. I tapped my foot for a moment. I opened the bag and handed the box to her. She gave me twenty dollars.

"Thank you," she said. "For helping to prove something."

"Thank you," I said taking the money. "Now what's the game?"

"We're newspaper people from the *Daily Sun*," one man said. "We are writing an article about people and their curiosity. We want to find out how far curious people will go to satisfy their curiosity. If you had thrown that package away we would not have paid you."

"What's in it?" I asked.

"Nothing," the other man said. "We spotted you as being a curious person and figured you would be a good test case. We didn't want to scare you but we had to add a little mystery and intrigue to help magnify your curiosity. Hope that clears everything up, miss."

"Thanks for the help," the girl said. "You'll read all about it in the *Daily Sun* with no names mentioned."

They got into their car. This should have cured me of being curious for a long time. It didn't. Now, every time I get curious, I remember the incident. My curiosity leaves me. Then I wonder if it might not be another chance to earn twenty dollars and I get more curious than ever. This feeling of curiosity is sure a curious affair.

SOLUTION TO STAIRSTEP PUZZLE

(Puzzle on page 36)

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E N O S
N O N E
O N C E
S E E M I N G
  I L A I
  N A A M
  G I M M I C K
    I D E A
    C E L L
    K A L E

```

Experience is what you get when you're looking for something else.

—The Seabag



The Services Remember the First Secretary of Defense

The four branches of the armed services paid tribute to the late James V. Forrestal as a bronze bust of the first Secretary of Defense was unveiled. The bust was made by Kalervo Kallio, son of the wartime President of Finland, and was selected by the Fine Arts Commission from 35 models. It stands in the Mall entrance of the Pentagon Building. (Washington, D. C., **Star** staff photo)



